

**MIDLAND SOCCER ASSOCIATION
RULES AND REGULATIONS**

10/07

1.0.0 AUTHORITY

Except as otherwise specified herein, Rules of Play of the North Texas Soccer Association (“NTSSA”) will apply in all competitions under jurisdictions of the Midland Soccer Association (“MSA”).

MSA will, at all times, recognize the authority, rules, rulings, constitution, and bylaws of North Texas State Soccer Association, which complies with the authority of the United States Soccer Federation (“USSF”), and the United States Youth Soccer Association (“USYSA”). MSA allows any rule, regulation, ruling, bylaw, and/or constitution change by NTSSA to be automatically reflected by our standing Bylaws and Rules & Regulations. Voting members of MSA shall receive, by mail, notification of such changes as they occur.

1.0.1 All Member Associations are directed to form their own Appeals and Disciplinary Committees (“A&D”) and to hold hearings – WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT – with every player/coach/assistant coach/spectators and/or parents as required for point accumulation or serious misconduct. All Member Associations are required to furnish NTSSA with a maintained up-to-date list of their A&D Committee members and to include their addresses and telephone numbers.

1.0.2 Any Bylaw may be temporarily changed or replaced by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors in attendance at a regularly scheduled board meeting. A minimum of 10 members must be present to make any changes.

This temporary change must be ratified at the next Midland Soccer Association Annual General Meeting or Semi-Annual General Meeting.

2.0.0 JURISDICTION

MSA shall have jurisdiction over all players, coaches, and teams, both recreational and select, registered with MSA and participating in games and/or tournaments sponsored by MSA.

Each player, coach and spectator will adhere to the Rules and Regulations of MSA and will comply with its authority.

Any MSA registered teams or individual (select or recreational) wishing to hold fundraising activities, must notify the MSA Board of Directors (“MSA Board”). A written request for fundraising must be submitted to the MSA Board a minimum of 30 days prior to the fundraising event.

Any clinic or camp involving MSA registered individuals or teams must be pre-approved by the MSA Board. A request to host a clinic or camp on an MSA soccer complex must be submitted for approval, in writing, to the MSA Board a minimum of 30 days prior to the commencement of said clinic or camp.

3.0.0 REGISTERED PLAYERS

3.0.1 Only registered players shall be permitted to play in competitions under the auspices of this Association or its affiliated leagues. A coach, assistant coach or administrator found to have knowingly allowed the use of an unregistered player(s) shall be suspended from all soccer activities for a minimum of one (1) year, and the team shall forfeit all games in which the unregistered player(s) participated. The player may also be subject to being suspended for a maximum of one (1) year.

3.0.2 Youth registration of soccer players under these MSA rules shall include all those registrants defined as youth by USSF, being male and female registrants of the age of under 19 years.

3.0.3 Registration

- a. Recreational: The player is registered to a recreation association from the moment the player or the player's agent signs the USYSA/MSA registration form and pays the appropriate fees to the Association. "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 MSA. Players registering after the deadline set by MSA Board of Directors is required to pay a \$10 non-refundable late fee to be rostered onto a team.
- b. Select: the player is registered and rostered to that team from the moment the player or the player's agent signs the USYSA/competitive player registration form and pays a portion of the fee to that team.
- c. Recreational Plus: For players U-11 and older. NTSSA allows dual registration of youth players for the purpose of Recreational Plus soccer. For a dual registered player, the player's recreational team shall be considered the primary team and the recreational plus team shall be considered the player's secondary team. The use of try-outs, invitations, recruiting or any similar process to roster players selectively to any teams on the basis of talent or ability is prohibited. Team formation may be comprised of methods outside normal recreational policies, but align with regulations listed in 6.3.0. The Association accepts as participants in the league any and all eligible youths. The Recreational Plus league will have a low-key competition program with a common set of rules. Recreational Plus teams must play in a Recreational Plus League. Statistics may or may not be kept. Recreational Plus teams may not enter recreational tournaments.
- d. Coed: It is intended that the playing rules for Youth Coed Soccer be flexible to fit the needs and specifics of each association.
 - 1. Team Formation
 - a. Youth coed may be played as full-sided or small sided.
 - 2. Number of Male Players
 - a. A team shall consist of male and female players. A keeper may be either male or female. A minimum of one male player is required to be on the field at all times and no more than 50% of the eligible players on the field at any one time may be male, excluding the goalkeeper, who may be male.
 - 3. Method of Scoring
 - a. Female Scorer: Goals scored directly by a female player will count as one (1) point when scored during the normal course of a game, or when scored during penalty kicks or in a shoot-out.
 - b. Male Scorer: Goals scored directly by a male player will count one (1) point (including a shootout goal).
 - 4. Fouls/Technical Violation
 - a. Slide tackles: Slide tackles against an opponent shall be considered dangerous play and are not permitted.
 - 5. Tournament Play
 - a. A youth coed team is not permitted to play in outdoor tournaments unless the tournament provides a coed division.
- e. Soccer Academies
 - 1. A "Soccer Academy" is a group of U-8 through U-19 registered NTSSA recreational players who desire to participate with other players without following the recreational team formation rules. Players must register with their home association and MUST be on a recreational team. Academies are to be

governed by NTSSA Youth Association, and NTSSA Youth Associations may host as many Soccer Academies as they deem desirable.

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 North Texas Soccer Youth Association. The Academies may charge a fee to cover expenses in addition to the player's recreational soccer registration fees.
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 determined as U-9 or U-10. U-8 teams and/or players must play in the U-9 division to participate. 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. Soccer Academy teams may travel out of state as a team to play in tournaments but Academy teams may only participate in tournaments that either have an Academy bracket or have a competitive bracket that allows Academy teams to participate.
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.

3.0.4 Release: Means the withdrawal of a player from a roster during the current seasonal year.

Any player rostered to a 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 MSA and NTSSA Youth Commissioners, in writing, on the form provided, stating the reason for the request of the release.

- a. Any recreational player desiring to be free of his/her contractual obligations before the end of the seasonal year (September 1 through August 31) must obtain a written release from the team that he/she is currently registered. Any player requesting and

failing to receive said release within 72 hours may request his/her release directly from the MSA Commissioner, who must render a decision within 72 hours. The Commissioner's decision may be appealed directly to the State Youth Commissioner, who shall render his/her decision. The State Youth Commissioner's decision may be appealed directly to the NTSSA Executive Committee to be acted upon immediately.

- b. A player may be released from a team involuntarily only if the player is unable to play for one of the following reasons:
 1. The player has violated rules of the U.S. Soccer Federation, USYSA, NTSSA or MSA.
 2. The player has moved beyond a reasonable travel distance. Determination of what constitutes a reasonable travel distance is subject to definition by NTSSA.
 3. The player is injured in such a manner that the player will not be able to participate for the remainder of the season.
 4. A competitive (select) player is obligated to his competitive team for the soccer playing year for competitive players from the time he/she signs a contract until the end of the subsequent playing year (August 1 of the prior soccer year through June 30 of the current soccer year). Any release to transfer to another NTSSA competitive team will be allowed only in limited circumstances. A written request for a release with the purpose of being able to transfer to another competitive team must be filed with NTSSA to be decided upon by the Competitive Soccer Committee that shall be chaired by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner or designee. This shall be done between the dates of December 1 and January 31 for U-11 through U-14 and December 1 and March 15 for U-15 through U-19 only. Upon receipt of the written request for transfer, the NTSSA office will forward a copy of the transfer to the player's current coach or manager for a written response. The Competitive Committee will render a decision based on the written reports received. Any appeal of this decision must be received by NTSSA in writing within five (5) days of receipt of the original decision and must be accompanied by a fee of \$50 (refundable at the Competitive Soccer Committee's discretion). Upon receipt of the appeal, the Competitive Committee will schedule a hearing 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 Executive Committee of NTSSA within five (5) days. A player may leave a competitive team and go into his home Member Association recreational player pool at any time before April 1 of the current soccer year with written permission from the NTSSA Youth Commissioner. Players may not be released from their competitive team after April 1, as no recreational player pool is available. Any recreational player currently rostered to a recreation 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 player's transfer to a competitive team.
- c. Any coach who releases a player involuntarily for any reason other than listed in 3.2.2.b.1., 2, or 3 above may be brought before the NTSSA Competitive Committee to explain his/her actions. If the Competitive Committee finds the involuntary release was not justified or should 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.

4.0.0 TEAMS

The following rules and regulations are deemed to be "general" rules and regulations that apply to all MSA registered teams and players (recreational and select), coaches, and/or spectators.

- 4.0.1 Excluding all-star teams and/or Olympic Development Programs, no individual may be listed as coach of record, assistant coach, and/or team manager on more than two (2) recreational team rosters during a soccer season (i.e., fall season or spring season). (Ref. MSA 5.10., 6.1.0, and 8.1.0)
- 4.0.2 Team names shall bear no resemblance to a religion, nationality, alcohol or tobacco product, or political party. Recreational team names cannot make reference to any select or competitive terminology.
- 4.0.3 Teams shall participate only in games approved by the Commissioner and/or the MSA Board.
- 4.0.4 Practices are allowed at the MSA Soccer Complexes only on days and fields as designated by the MSA Commissioner. Coaches and/or teams abusing this policy may be subject to suspension from play pending review by the MSA Ethics Committee.
- 4.0.5 The MSA lighted fields are available for limited practices on a scheduled basis only. Scheduling will be determined and administered by the MSA Board. The team or entity requesting the use of lighted fields shall reimburse any fees imposed, per the contract with the City of Midland for the use of lights, to MSA. A deposit may be requested from the team or entity prior to use.
- 4.0.6 With the exception of Saturday and Sunday practices, all weekday practices (Monday through Friday) must be held after 5:30 p.m. unless the coach of record receives written permission from every parent on the team that the coach may hold practice prior to 5:30 p.m. A copy of the written letters from the parents must be submitted to the age appropriate MSA Vice-Commissioner.
- 4.0.7 Players will remain on the same team throughout the soccer year, with the soccer year being defined as September 1 through August 31 of the following calendar year. MSA will ensure that all those rostered players will be contacted and given an opportunity to remain on the "nucleus" team.

4.1.0 NUCLEUS

For recreational teams only, a "nucleus" is defined as the core of players (minimum number of four) who played with a team registered with MSA/NTSSA in the immediately preceding season. Players will not be eligible to be part of the team nucleus until they have completed the required registration process for the current soccer year.

When a nucleus is split at the beginning of a soccer year due to age difference, two (2) nuclei may elect to hold either or both nuclei as the basis of a new team. Either nucleus, if not held together as described above as part of a new team, will be returned to the Team Assignment Pool ("TAP"). The Commissioner shall attempt to keep together any group of four (4) players who participated as members of a team in the previous season and who want to continue as a group on a new team.

Team nuclei can be disbanded only with the approval of the Commissioner. A coach quitting a team does not disband the team.

- 4.1.1 In recreational play, coaches, parents, players, etc., shall not be allowed to recruit. NTSSA rules and punishment shall be applied to those coaches, parents, players and/or teams in violation. In select play, recruiting may only take place according to the guidelines of NTSSA rules and regulations and during the "free-agency period" (July 1 through August 31) for these groups. (See MSA 4.10.0.)

4.2.0 REGISTRATION

4.2.1 Divisions will be formed as follows:

<u>Junior League</u>	<u>Senior League</u>	
Under-5 Girls	Under-11 Girls	Under-15 Girls
Under-5 Boys	Under-11 Boys	Under-15 Boys

Under-6 Girls	Under-12 Girls	Under-16 Girls
Under-6 Boys	Under-12 Boys	Under-16 Boys
Under-7 Girls	Under-13 Girls	Under-17 Girls
Under-7 Boys	Under-13 Boys	Under-17 Boys
Under-8 Girls	Under-14 Girls	Under-19 Girls
Under-8 Boys	Under-14 Boys	Under-19 Boys
Under-9 Girls		
Under-9 Boys		
Under-10 Girls		
Under-10 Boys		

Teams in the U-5 and U-6 Divisions may be co-ed or divided out by gender, with the numbers at registration being the determining factor, at the discretion of the Commissioner, U-6 Boys' Vice-Commissioner and U-6 Girls' Vice-Commissioner. In the event any other division (i.e., U-17 and U-19 Divisions) does not have enough boys and girls to form separate divisions, those divisions will be co-ed and the teams will play as boys' teams or co-ed teams.

Senior league divisions may include select teams registering with MSA. A select team may be released by the Commissioner to play in another select league. (If a select team is released, all registration fees (except those payable to NTSSA for registration and insurance) will be refunded by MSA to each player on the team. If a team is released and no longer registers its players with MSA, MSA shall not provide use of playing fields, or other facilities or services such teams, except by Board approval.)

- 4.2.2 The age used to determine a player's division will be his/her birth date. Teams will be comprised of those birth dates which fall from August 1 through July 31 of the next year, unless that player has completed the required MSA paperwork to request to "play up" in the next age group, and such request has been granted by the MSA Commissioner and appropriate Vice-Commissioner.
- 4.2.3 A player must be four (4) years old by July 31 to register for that fall soccer season and four (4) years old by December 31 of the preceding year to register for that spring season.
- 4.2.4 The Commissioner is responsible for ensuring the eligibility of all players. All players must present a birth certificate or other legal proof of age when registering with MSA for the first time, or when requested by the Commissioner or his/her representative.
- 4.2.5 No player may register without written consent from a parent or guardian.
- 4.2.6 A player becomes an official team member only after payment of the required registration fee and the acceptance of his/her registration form by the Registrar, and may be a member of only one MSA/NTSSA team (excluding all-star teams and Olympic Development Teams) at one time. Once a player is placed on a team, the registration fee will not be refundable if that player has participated in a practice with the assigned team. Such request for refund must be in writing and will be validated by a representative of MSA prior to the issuance of a refund check.
- 4.2.7 A player shall be ineligible and may be removed from a team if a check covering that player's registration fee is not negotiable.
- 4.3.0 TRANSFER OF PLAYERS
 - 4.3.1 Per NTSSA rules, a player may transfer from one team to another only one time during a soccer year. (See MSA 4.5.0)

The transfer of recreational players is discouraged, and should only take place where an irreconcilable problem exists. Recreational players may petition the MSA Board on a case-by-case basis by filing out an MSA "Request to Change Teams" form.

The recruiting of a recreational player from one team to another is not allowed.

The transfer of a recreational player who has participated for a specific coach as a guest player or on an Olympic Development Team to that coach's regular roster is prohibited for the remainder of that soccer year and for the next soccer year.

All players who leave/transfer off a recreational team to another recreational team will be put into the Team Assignment Pool for reassignment.

- 4.3.2 After registration of teams during either season, the recreational player must:
- (a) Have approval of parent or guardian;
 - (b) Obtain approval of the MSA Commissioner;
 - (c) Obtain written release from the currently assigned team coach; and,
 - (d) Pay MSA a transfer fee of \$10.00.

4.4.0 RECRUITING

4.4.1 For the purpose of MSA, the term "recruiting" shall mean to discuss with an MSA player his/her future select team affiliation with MSA.

4.4.2 No coach, assistant coach, trainer, team representative, registered player, parent or advertisement may offer any kind of inducement to recruit a player to play on his/her respective team. Coaches are responsible for the actions of all of the aforementioned participants on their team. Forms of inducement include, but are not limited to:

Free T-shirts, free uniforms, college scholarships, free or discounted travel costs and/or negative statements which could affect the decision of a player regarding choice of teams. This rule applies to any type of communication, including, but not limited to: verbal discussions, letters, brochures, printed or broadcast advertisements, and the use of the Internet and/or E-mail. Failure to comply with this rule shall result in the offending party being suspended from all soccer activities for a period of not less than one (1) year, except allegations against registered you players are subject to review before punishments are considered. Complainant will file his complaint with the Youth Commissioner, who shall rend a decision. Either party may file an appeal of the Youth Commissioner's decision with the NTSSA State Executive Committee according to the Bylaws of the NTSSA.

4.4.3 Recruiting within MSA is not permissible unless both of the following conditions are met:

- (a) The recruiting occurs during the period beginning with July 1 and ending August 31 of the current soccer year; and
- (b) The recruiting is done on behalf of a senior league select team.

4.4.4 Where the Ethics Committee finds that transfer is the result of recruiting, the guilty party(ies) (i.e., coach, parents, players, etc.) will be suspended from all MSA activities for not less than one soccer year.

4.5.0 GUEST PLAYERS

4.5.1 Guest players (registered players of one team playing on another) will be allowed for non-association play according to NTSSA Rule 4.7. Guest players may practice with the team on which they are a guest only if the dates for the practices are included on the guest player release form signed by the guest player's registered coach. Recreational players participating as guest players may not transfer to the receiving coach's regular roster for the remainder of that soccer year and the next full soccer

year without the specific written approval of the player's home association. Violators of this rule are subject to discipline under the rules governing use of ineligible players.

4.5.2 Guest players participating in activities necessitating the use of USSF travel I.D. cards will have such cards stamped "Guest Player" across the face of the card before it is sealed. Such I.D. card may not be issued less than 14 days prior to tournament date as listed on the USSF travel permit.

4.5.3 Guest players are not allowed in any friendly games which are defined as follows:

- a. Are not associated with any other games either played or to be played, and they do not lead to any championship;
- b. Do not lead to any trophy or award;
- c. Do not require a fee to be paid by any player to sponsor;
- d. Are organized in a spontaneous fashion; and,
- e. 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.

4.6.0 PROPER DRESS

4.6.1 MSA will not be required to provide uniforms for its registered players. All teams shall have the right to purchase and wear uniforms of their choice, providing said uniforms bear no reference to or advertisement of alcohol, tobacco, religion, nationality or political affiliation. The MSA Board reserves the right to censure uniforms not conforming to stated guidelines.

4.6.2. For Recreational teams only, there will be a uniform price cap of \$40.00 per season. For this rule, a "uniform" consists of a jersey, shorts, and socks. No parent will be required to pay more than \$40 per uniform, per child, per season. Should the team find a sponsor or other party willing to donate funds to purchase uniforms that exceed the \$40 cap, MSA will require the name and telephone number of the sponsor to be included in the team records on file at the MSA office.

4.6.3 In order to participate, a MSA rostered player must be dressed as follows:

- (a) Jersey and shorts. Each player shall have a number not less than four (4) inches high on the back of his/her jersey.
- (b) Regulation soccer shoes, gym shoes or sneakers (with or without rubber cleats) are permissible in all MSA competition.
- (c) Shinguards are MANDATORY in all MSA competition and practices, and must be completely covered by the sock.
- (d) Players shall not be allowed to practice or participate in games with any type of cast, splint, or leg brace, unless designated not dangerous to other players by the game referee.

4.6.4 Dress for all league teams shall be governed by FIFA rules as administered by the game referee.

4.7.0 SANCTION FOR VIOLATION OF RULES

Failure to comply with the "Rules for Registration of Youth Players" shall 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. The offending player may be suspended from soccer activities for a period of not more than one (1) year.

5.0.0 GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE JUNIOR LEAGUE DIVISIONS

5.0.1 Excluding all-star teams and/or Olympic Development Teams, no individual may be listed as a coach of record, assistant coach, and/or team manager on more than two (2) recreational team rosters during a soccer season (i.e., fall season and spring season). (Ref. MSA 4.1.0, 6.1.0 and 8.1.0)

5.0.2 Teams in the U-5 Division shall play four (4) players to a side in league games. Teams in the U-6 Division shall play four (4) players to a side in league games. Teams in the U-7 and U-8 Divisions shall play five (5) players to a side in league games. Teams in the U-9 Division shall play six (6) to a side in league games. U-10 Divisions shall play six (6) players to a side in league games.

5.1.0 **TEAM FORMATION FOR THE JUNIOR LEAGUE DIVISIONS**

5.1.1 Teams in the Junior Divisions shall be composed of players from one neighborhood public elementary school (“NES”) whenever possible. Teams will be identified with an NES before players are identified to a team assignment pool as that term is defined below.

5.1.2 If a player is unable to be rostered to his/her NES, that player will be placed according to the junior high school to which the NES is assigned.

5.1.3 A player “sitting out” one season can return to the player’s former RECREATIONAL team **provided** space is available.

5.1.4 Attempts shall be made each season to ensure that a youngster playing on a team outside his/her neighborhood public elementary school area be given the opportunity to move to his/her area by going through the team assignment pool by filling out an MSA “Request to Change Teams” form. It should be recognized that placement on a neighborhood team does not guarantee that the player will practice at the neighborhood school.

5.1.5 A player signing up after the last scheduled sign up period can return to the player’s former RECREATIONAL team **provided** space is available at the time the Association received the player’s MSA registration form.

5.2.0 **TEAM ASSIGNMENT POOL**

5.2.1 Each player who is not a member of a team nucleus shall be placed in a Team Assignment Pool (“TAP”) for his/her neighborhood public elementary school to then be placed in a random draw. Players shall not be identified to the coach until the MSA seasonal coaches’ meeting. Only the head coach of a team may request his/her child to be rostered to the team that he/she is coaching. Any other method of team formation is considered select.

6.0.0 GENERAL RULES & REGULATIONS FOR THE SENIOR LEAGUE RECREATIONAL DIVISIONS

6.0.1 Excluding all-star teams and/or Olympic Development Teams, no individual may be listed as coach of record, assistant coach, and/or team manager on more than two (2) recreational team rosters during a soccer season (i.e., fall season or spring season). (Ref. MSA 4.1.0, 5.1.0 and 8.1.0)

6.0.2 U-11 and older teams will have rosters with a maximum of 18 players and play 11 a side. (Ref. NTSSA Rule 3.14.3)

6.1.0 **TEAM FORMATION FOR THE SENIOR LEAGUE RECREATIONAL DIVISIONS**

6.1.1 Rules for the Junior League Divisions will apply. In addition:

(a) If no players are available in the player pool, coaches of record may actively seek players of the proper age group within the Member Association to be added to a supplemental draft, and:

(1) The player is not presently registered on an existing team.

(2) The player did not play for a returning recreational team during the previous season.

(b) Players added to the pool will be assigned to only those teams participating in the original blind draw, through an additional blind draw as administered by the Commissioner.

7.0.0 ALL-STAR TEAMS

- 7.0.1 Players who have not attained the proper age to be eligible for U-11 play shall not be allowed to “play up” on competitive (select or try-out) teams, or in tournaments designated competitive, including all-star competitions.
- 7.0.2 A designated select competition will be identified and submitted to the Commissioner for approval.
- 7.0.3 Coaches within MSA can petition to be chosen for all-star coaching privileges. All-star coaches must have a state “E” license (or equivalent thereof) to apply for the position. A committee consisting of the Commissioner, Senior-Vice Commissioner, and Coaching Director will review and select a coach for the specific all-star tryout and competition. The designated coach may submit to the committee, for approval, an assistant coach to assist him/her with the all-star team.
 - 7.0.3.1 Coaches of teams in the recreational age group of the all-star formation will work, encourage, and support the all-star coach and the players involved in the tryouts and the competition.
- 7.0.4 Player’s whose regular team has elected to participate in an event, outside its regular league schedule, conflicting with that competition selected for the all-star event must support their regular team and are ineligible to be selected to the all-star roster.
- 7.0.5 All eligible registered recreational players within the designated age group will be notified of the try-outs. These players may attend all try-out practices, up to the team selection date. After the selection, only members of the all-star roster will practice and scrimmage with the coach in preparation for the competition. The roster of the all-star team shall not exceed 18 players.
- 7.0.6 The all-star team will disband after the specific competition.
- 7.0.7 A recreational all-star teamed formed during the current soccer year may not form as a competitive team until the following soccer year.

8.0.0 GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE SELECT DIVISIONS

- 8.0.1 Excluding all-star teams and Olympic Development Teams, no individual may be listed as coach of record, assistant coach, and/or team manager on more than two (2) recreational team rosters during a soccer season (i.e., fall season or spring season). (Ref. MSA 4.1.0, 5.1.0 and 6.1.0)
- 8.0.2 All select teams completing the prior season (or the last season in which they participated) in good standing with MSA, automatically are invited to compete in the next soccer season.
- 8.0.3 All returning and/or anticipated new select teams must submit to the MSA Board a completed copy of their NTSSA Club Fact Sheet prior to the regularly scheduled MSA board meeting. The original copy of the Club Fact Sheet must be submitted to NTSSA on or before June 15 of each year.
 - 8.0.3.1 The minimum coach’s license requirement for the coach of record of a select team will be a NTSSA state “E” license (or equivalent) for the U-11 through U-16 age groups, and a NTSSA state “D” license (or equivalent) for the U-17 through U-19 age groups.
- 8.0.4 Try-outs must be held according to the NTSSA and MSA rules, and must be held between July 1 and August 31, or December 1 and January 31 for U-11 through U-14 age groups and December 1 through March 15 for U-15 through U-19 age groups. A player release form is always required prior to approaching a player from another team, unless it is during the free agency period of July 1 through August 31 of the current soccer year.

- 8.0.5 Select team rosters with a minimum of 11 players must be submitted to the MSA Registrar as soon as possible and no later than September 1 of the fall season and March 31 of the spring season.
- 8.0.6 The select team fee, for the registration through MSA, will be set by the MSA Board. The Board will determine how many games MSA will furnish for this fee, including referees and fields.
 - 8.0.6.1 Each registered select team playing a scheduled game on an MSA field will be assigned a set of nets and four (4) corner flags, and is responsible for returning said equipment in good working condition at the end of the season. If said equipment is not returned in good working condition, said select team will be ineligible to participate in the next playing season.
- 8.0.7 Games scheduled between select teams and recreational teams must be approved by the Commissioner.
- 8.0.8 Select teams wishing to return to the recreational program will be completely disbanded and all players will be placed in the TAP for assignment.

9.0.0 COMPETITION

- 9.0.1 U-10 and older fall and spring league champions shall be determined by the use of the following scoring point system:

Points will be awarded as follows:

- (a) Three (3) points for a win;
- (b) One (1) point for a tie; and,
- (c) Zero (0) points for a loss.

Point system calculations may be revised, as needed, prior to the beginning of each season.

Each team's point total, as set out above, will be calculated for the season in order to determine each respective age group's standings.

- 9.0.2 If two or more teams are tied in points after games for the current season are completed, the following tiebreaker procedures will be used to determine team standings:
 - (a) Head-to-head game results -- winner will advance in the standings.
 - (b) Goal differential - team with the highest goal differential against the opponents will advance (maximum of 3 goals scored minus goals against). Only the first 3 goals scored by any team in any game will be counted in calculating winning points for advancement. (Example: a 4-1 game = 3-1 in calculating advancement; a 10-4 game = 3-3 in calculating advancement).
 - (c) Fewest goals allowed – team with the fewest goals scored against them will advance in the standings.
 - (d) Most number of shut-outs – team with the most shut-outs against opponents will advance in the standings.
 - (e) Fewest accumulation of caution points for the current season under NTSSA Caution Point System, Rule 3.11.2.2 – 1 point for yellow cards and 2 points for red cards.
 - (f) Play-off game or kicks from the penalty mark – whichever method is agreed upon by the respective coaches.

These tiebreaker procedures will be applied, in order, to the teams tied in points until one team is selected for advancement.

- 9.0.2.1 If all teams in the League or Division play every other team in the same League or Division twice, both games count in the final League Standings. If only some teams, but not all teams play each other twice, the second game counts toward the final League standings.

9.1.0 TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS (“TOC”)

By definition, the TOC is a NTSSA sponsored, recreational tournament and is usually held the first weekend in December, but in any event, at, or shortly after, the end of the fall season, at a place or places to be determined by NTSSA. The competition is open for all NTSSA member associations to send their local league division champions for the U-10 and older recreational divisions, boys and girls, respectively.

9.1.1 At this time, NTSSA does not offer a junior and senior division in a respective age group (i.e., U-10 Jr. Boys, U-10 Sr. Boys). Accordingly, MSA defines the following policy for selecting the MSA representative team in an age group where junior/senior divisions exist (i.e., U-10, U-11 and U-12, etc.):

(a) The senior division winner (i.e., U-10, U-12, U-14, etc.) will be MSA’s choice for association representation at the TOC unless the following conditions are met:

1. The junior/senior divisions in a respective age group do not play separate schedules; the division winner will be MSA’s representation, regardless of age.

This statement includes competitions scheduled by MSA between junior/senior divisions **even though** the result of that competition does not count for local association standings; i.e., the junior divisions playing the senior divisions in order to allow the senior divisions the minimum number of games offered by MSA, but the result of which competition does not count as a win or loss for either team in its respective division standings. The result of such competition shall be counted for determination as to TOC competition.

2. The junior and senior divisions play separate schedules, but the senior division winner (a) does not wish to participate in the TOC, or (b) cannot field a team sufficient to participate in the TOC, then the junior division winner will be offered the right to attend the TOC. If the junior division winner does not accept under these conditions, the offer will be extended to the second place senior division winner, if this team also declines, the offer will be extended to the second place junior winner. At no time will the offer be extended beyond the second place winner of any division.

(b) Where a junior and senior division does not exist, and they each play a separate schedule with no competition between the teams assigned by MSA, the junior division winner may challenge the senior division winner for the right to participate in the TOC, as follows:

1. The junior division winner must notify the MSA Commissioner, in writing, of such intent to qualify for the TOC as soon as the junior division winner is reasonably assured of winning its division, but in no event later than the last regularly scheduled playing day of the MSA fall season. If a junior team knows it is in contention to win its division, it may submit such written notification of its desire to qualify for the TOC to the Commissioner at any time within the last two (2) weeks of the fall season, with the understanding that if the junior team does not win its division, no qualifying match will be scheduled.

2. If a junior team requests such a qualifying match, the senior division winner is obligated to participate in such match. If the senior division winner elects not to participate, the match will be deemed a forfeit,

and the junior division team will be considered the winner of such competition and will have earned the right to participate in the TOC.

3. If a qualifying match is requested, the Commissioner will schedule it at the earliest possible opportunity. The match will not be played unless USSF certified referees (center and lines) would be available to officiate. A minimum of two (2) MSA board members (preferably the Commissioner and Vice-Commissioner of the age group involved) must also be present during the entire game. The match cannot end in a tie; therefore, should the game be tied after regulation time (full-length game time for the respective age group), two (2) 10-minute overtime periods will be played, after which, if the tied score remains, the game will be decided by taking of penalty kicks as defined by FIFA. Weather will not interfere with such qualifying matches unless, in the opinion of the referee and/or the Commissioner, conditions exist which are dangerous to the players involved. All decisions of the referees will be final and the match winner will advance to the TOC as the MSA representative.

9.1.2 At no time will any team not rostered by MSA as a recreational team be allowed to petition to qualify to attend the TOC.

9.1.3 Only MSA teams playing in an MSA-approved league schedule will be considered for qualification to the TOC.

9.1.4 MSA may, with board approval, assist its TOC representatives by furnishing team entries and/or performance bonds (if required); however, the actual cost of attending and participating in the TOC will be the responsibility of the team(s) attending.

9.2.0 In case of failure to play a scheduled game, the game will be deemed a forfeit and the offending team shall lose said game by a score of 1-0. If the game is a double forfeiture, no points will be awarded.

9.3.0 Games shall be played as scheduled. Only the Commissioner shall have the authority to cancel games prior to the start of the day's schedule in the event of severe conditions. On a game-by-game basis, should severe weather develop, the referee in charge has the sole power to cancel said game.

9.3.1 In the U-10 and older divisions, if a game is canceled due to weather before the half-time period; the game will be rescheduled and replayed. If a game is canceled due to weather after the half-time period, the game score will stand as final.

9.4.0 In case of postponed game, the appropriate Vice Commissioner shall have the full power to reschedule. If coaches request a game to be rescheduled, the Vice Commissioner must be notified **in writing** no less than seven (7) days prior to the regularly scheduled game.

Rescheduling, **with seven (7) days written notice**, will be allowed for the following reasons only:

- (a) If an all-star team prevents the recreational team from being able to field a full line-up.
- (b) A school event in your team's age group that affect the team's ability to field a full line-up.
- (c) When an MSA-registered team wishes to attend an NTSSA-sanctioned tournament, and did not request such when filling out the pre-season Reschedule Conflict Form.
- (d) Other reschedule requests shall be made at the full discretion and approval of the Executive Board and shall also require no less than seven (7) days written notice.

9.5.0 Coaches or other officials shall not enter the field of play unless requested by the referee. However, in the U-5 and U-6 divisions, coaches may enter the field to line up teams before

the start of each quarter of play. Spectators (parents, grandparents, siblings) shall not enter the field of play unless authorized by the referee.

- 9.6.0 Awards shall be given in the U-10 and older divisions to the individual team members based on the standings as the end of regular season play. The Commissioner and Vice-Commissioners will determine the number of placements awarded based on each season's registration. In the U-10 division, standings will be kept in accordance with MSA Rules and Regulations Section 10.0.0 Competition; however, all teams that are not eligible to receive a placement trophy will receive a participation award at the end of the season.

In the fall season, in the U-9 division, every player will receive a participation award and no standings or scores will be kept. In the spring season, the U-9 division awards will be given based on standings at the end of regular spring season play.

In the U-9 spring season and U-10-division in fall and spring, standings will be kept in accordance with MSA Rules and Regulations Section 9.0.0 Competition; however, all teams that are not eligible to receive a placement trophy will receive a participation award at the end of the season. In any Senior League division, awards will be given only if an in-town schedule is provided in that division.

In the U-8 and younger divisions, every player will receive a participation award and no standings or scores will be kept.

- 9.7.0 Properly completed line-up forms (game cards) shall be presented to the referee prior to the start of every game and shall include the names of all players, whether present or not, with any explanation of all absences or discipline. Playing out-of-town does not eliminate the requirement that game cards be presented, completed, and returned to the Vice-Commissioner, or representative.

- 9.8.0 Recreational coaches must submit properly completed game cards no later than the Wednesday following the game played by depositing same in the receptacle provided at each MSA complex or, if no receptacle is accessible, by forwarding the completed game card to the MSA office by fax, mail or personal delivery on or before the Wednesday indicated. Failure to so submit a completed game card for any game may be grounds for misconduct in U-5 through U-9 divisions, and will subject the coaches to a forfeiture of games in the U-10 and older divisions.

- 9.9.0 The following shall constitute the minimum number of players required to field a team:

U-11 and Older:	8
U-9 and 10:	5
U-7 and 8:	4
U-6:	4
U-5:	3

- 9.10.0 Home team shall be the team listed first on the schedule of competition. At all complexes, except BUTLER, the home team shall take the North (or West) 1/2 of the North or West sideline. Visiting teams (listed second on the schedule of competition) shall take the South (or East) 1/2 of the North or West sideline. The home teams shall change jerseys, or wear different colored "pennies", in case of conflicting jersey colors.

Parents/Spectators are on the South or East sideline.

- 9.11.0 Failure of both teams to be ready within ten (10) minutes of scheduled kick-off time shall constitute a double forfeiture.

- 9.12.0 Size of Ball

The ball size for each division will be as follows:

Under-8 and Younger:	Size 3
Under-9 through Under-12:	Size 4

Under-13 and Older: Size 5

- 9.13.0 If the season is shortened so that more than one game per week is needed to complete it, the schedule should be arranged to allow for multiple games on an intermediate or final weekend.
- 9.14.0 If older teams are scheduled to play younger teams, the younger age group will be given the choice of ball size, field size, and duration of game of that used by the older division, prior to the start of the game.
- 9.15.0 Teams outside MSA’s jurisdiction may be included in recreational division play if the following conditions are met:
 - (a) Teams must be a member in good standing of their home association and have the permission of their home association to participate.
 - (b) Teams must register with and pay NTSSA fees through their home association.
 - (c) Teams will follow MSA Rules and Regulations governing competition.
 - (d) A copy of the team’s roster **must** be turned in to the MSA Registrar prior to being scheduled for play.
 - (e) Games scheduled outside of MSA jurisdiction must use NTSSA certified referees, unless approved by the Commissioner, and also, come under the jurisdiction of the MSA A&D Committee.
 - (f) If there is no local association, teams may register through MSA.
 - (g) Teams not registered through MSA will be responsible for purchasing their own trophies.

9.16.0 Duration of Games

9.16.1	<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Length of Quarter/Halves</u>
	Under-5	Four 10-minute quarters
	Under-6	Four 10-minute quarters
	Under-7	Four 12-minute quarters
	Under-8	Four 12-minute quarters
	Under-9	Two 25 minute halves
	Under-10	Two 25 minute halves
	Under-11	Two 30 minute halves
	Under-12	Two 30 minute halves
	Under-13	Two 35 minute halves
	Under-14	Two 35 minute halves
	Under-15	Two 40 minute halves
	Under-16	Two 40 minute halves
	Under-17 & Older	Two 45 minute halves

9.16.2 Half-time periods shall be a minimum of five (5) minutes and a maximum of ten (10) minutes, as designated by the referee. In the U-8 and younger divisions, breaks between quarters will be a minimum of two (2) minutes and a maximum of five (5) minutes, as designated by the referee.

9.17.0 Playing Time / Substitution

9.17.1 Each recreation player, when present at a game, shall be require to play the minimum of 50% of the time, unless the player’s time has been reduced for medical or disciplinary reasons. (See MSA 9.17.2)

9.17.2 The Commissioner is the ONLY person who can authorize a reduction of playing time for disciplinary reasons. Before playing time is reduced, the parents of the child will be contacted to determine the reason behind the lack of attendance. A child should attend at least one (1) practice per week.

9.17.2.1 Children in the U5 – U10 age groups should not be required to play soccer to the exclusion of other activities, e.g. Boy/Girl Scouts, musical instrument practice, etc. If a child is consistently absent from practice without giving a

reason, but attends every game, then the coach should call the Commissioner to explain the situation. If it is determined that the child should receive reduced playing time, the Commissioner will call the coach and the parents to let them know of the reduction.

9.17.2.2 PRIOR to the start of the next game, the coach must notify the player, and the opposing coach that the minimum time has been reduced (not attending practice and non-payment of fees MAY be cause for disciplinary action.) (See NTSSA 3.14.3.3)

9.17.2.3 If it is determined that reduced playing time is warranted for one (1) game, the player will play no less than one-quarter (25%) of the game.

9.17.3 Under-8 and Younger Divisions:

- (a) Substitutions should be made at quarters and at half time. In the event of the caution of a player, the coach may substitute that player.
- (b) Respective coaches of each team may substitute no players or as many as needed at each quarter or half-time. A player who is present prior to the start of the game must play at least two (2) quarters of the game, and a player who arrives after the start of the game, but prior to half-time, must play at least one (1) quarter.
- (c) If a player is injured, the coach may provide a substitute for that player. That player may return at a stoppage in play with the referee's permission. Only the player who is injured is credited with a quarter's play regardless of the actual time played.
- (d) Each player must play at least one-quarter (1/4) of the game as a field player when playing in the game as a goalkeeper.

9.17.4 Under-9 and Older Divisions:

- (a) Free substitution will be allowed. A team may substitute prior to a throw-in (only on possession); either team may substitute prior to any goal kick, or after any goal has been scored, or at half-time. Additionally, a team may substitute when the referee has stopped play for an injured player or to administer a caution, but only the injured or cautioned player may be substituted.
- (b) The coach must receive the referee's permission prior to a substitution. The player must leave the field along the center line before the substitution can come onto the field.
- (c) Free substitution does not relieve the playing time requirement specified in MSA 10.19.1.

9.17.5 In the U-9 and older divisions, the referee must be told specifically that a goalkeeper is being substituted. The player must notify the referee.

10.0.0 OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY OF EQUIPMENT

10.0.1 The custodianship and disposition of equipment and supplies purchased by MSA shall be with MSA.

10.0.2 Daily, the teams playing the first game scheduled on a given field will be responsible for putting nets and corner flags up (one end per team) on that field; the last teams scheduled on a given field will be responsible for taking down that field's nets and corner flags (one end per team), and returning such equipment to the concession building for that complex. Failure to follow these procedures can result in sanctions from the Ethics Committee for the offending team or teams.

11.0.0 OFFICIATING

11.0.1 Referees shall, at all times, impose the Rules and Regulations of competition in effect by MSA and FIFA (Federation of International Futbol Association) rules in general. (Ref. MSA 15.1.0.)

- 11.0.2 Referees shall, at all times, put great emphasis on the welfare of the players and officiate the game in a manner requiring fair competition and good sportsmanship.
- 11.0.3 All referees for competitive and recreation MSA games shall maintain current registration and shall be approved by the MSA Director of Officiating. Conflicts of interest shall be avoided (i.e., no family participation in the division).
- 11.0.4 Coaches, players, parents, and other spectators are subject to disciplinary actions and other sanctions by MSA and other authorities in case of harassment, abuse and other inappropriate conduct toward any referee

12.0.0 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COACHES AND OFFICIALS

12.0.1 Persons who coach U- 6 and U-8 age teams, and are not USYSA-licensed coaches, must attend a “G” coaching course prior to or during the next season in which they coach those age groups. (Ref. NTSSA Rule 4.12.)

It shall further be the duty of each coach and official to:

- 12.0.2 Conduct himself/herself in a manner becoming a member of MSA.
- 12.0.3 At all times, **require** clean competition and good sportsmanship.
- 12.0.4 Endeavor to train and coach their players to the best of their ability.
- 12.0.5 **Know and enforce** the Rules and Regulations of MSA.
- 12.0.6 Participate in positive coaching that instructs and encourages players during games. Spectators and coaching activities shall be limited to the sidelines between the two penalty areas. Negative comments and complaints about refereeing **will not be allowed**. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of spectators associated with their team.
- 12.0.7 Ensure that parents provide only encouragement to the players.

13.0.0 INJURIES

Any injury on which a claim is to be filed, or any damage caused by a MSA participant shall be reported to the Commissioner **immediately**.

14.0.0 FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- 14.0.1 Referees shall, at all times, impose the Rules and Regulations of competition as designated by MSA and FIFA (Federation of International Futbol Association) rules in general. (Ref. MSA 12.1.0)
- 14.0.2 In all MSA play, charging a goalkeeper that is in possession of the ball is not allowed. Possession is defined as “one or more hands trapping the ball on the ground, holding the ball, bouncing the ball, or tossing it up and then catching it.”
- 14.0.3 It is **not** an intentional “hand ball” offense for any player to attempt to protect his/her body (chest, crotch, face) by placing the hands or arms across themselves in a strictly reflex action to protect themselves from being struck with the ball. The referee shall be the sole judge of whether the hands or arms are used in this manner.

15.0.0 FIELD OF PLAY

- 15.0.1 Dimensions of all markings, goal areas, penalty areas, corner areas, and goals will be per USYSA rules.
- 15.0.2 On open fields where most youth games are played, the field shall be marked (where possible) with a spectator control line parallel to the touchline (sideline) at a distance of at

least three (3) feet from the touchline. All coaches, referees, lines personnel, and other league officials are asked to ensure that spectators remain behind this line.

- 15.0.3 With exception of photographers who have received permission from the referee, and who must remain quiet and sufficiently back from the goal line, no one will be allowed beyond the penalty area or behind the goal line. No coaching will be allowed behind the goal line or **past the 18-yard line** by coaches, assistant coaches, parents, players or spectators.

16.0.0 FORFEITS

Any of the following constitutes a game forfeiture:

- 16.0.1 Fielding an ineligible player or suspended player.
- 16.0.2 A suspended coach must not be present at the game. No suspended player may be present in uniform at the game. Any ejected participant must leave the area of the field as soon as possible if so instructed by the referee.
- 16.0.3 Failure to field a team with a minimum of eight (8) players (U-11 and older), five (5) players (U- 9 & 10), four (4) players (U-7 & 8), three (3) players (U-6 & 5) within ten (10) minutes after the scheduled game time according to the referee's watch. Schedule mix-up does not excuse forfeit. Coaches are encouraged to confirm the schedule.
- 16.0.4 Failure to play an eligible player the minimum amount of time required under MSA 10.19.0 herein, other than for disciplinary action by the coach in accordance with MSA 10.19.1.
- 16.0.5 Any team that receives three (3) red cards during one game shall forfeit said game by a score of 1:0, unless the score was more favorable for the winner when play was stopped, in which case, the existing score shall be declared the final score. All play will cease with the third ejection and all players will be required to leave the field.
- 16.0.6 Prior to the first season game of the recreational divisions, practices are limited to four (4) per week. After the first season game, team practices shall not exceed three (3) in number during any calendar week. Weeknight practices shall not begin prior to 5:30 p.m. except with written parental consent from the entire team.

17.0.0 PROTESTS

- 17.0.1 There are only two (2) acceptable causes for the protesting of a game after it has been played. They are:
- a. The playing of an unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player; or,
 - b. There has been an obvious error made in the application of the laws of the game by the referee, **and** he/she acknowledges the conditions to support the error.
- 17.0.2 No protests will be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the referee during play.
- 17.0.3 Protests (under MSA 18.1.0) will not be entertained unless the referee is notified of the intention to protest at the end of the game in which the protested issue occurred, and intent to protest is noted on the game card.
- 17.0.4 Protest must be written and submitted to the Commissioner, or his/her representative, within 48 hours after the game terminates. A \$25.00 fee must accompany the written protest. Should the protest be upheld, the fee will be refunded.

18.0.0 DISCIPLINE

18.1.0 Authority

1. All members and participants in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of NTSSA have requested to participate in NTSSA 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 United States Soccer

Federation and its National Association 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 United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations of which NTSSA is a member, may be subject to publication in the monthly newsletter or NTSSA President's Newsletter of the 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 NTSSA 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. All Member Associations are required to furnish NTSSA with a maintained up-to-date list of their A&D Chairman and Committee members and to include their addresses and phone numbers.

18.2.0 Misconduct of Youth Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches

- .1 All Member Associations, Playing Leagues and Tournament Officials are directed to operate and keep records on a "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for all players/coaches/assistant coaches. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card. Cards issued in league play are cumulative during the entire soccer year. When a player transfers to another team, his or her accumulated league play cards count against the cumulative card totals for both his or her old and new teams.
- .2 A "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" in league play will be operated as follows:
 - a. **Yellow Cards** One (1) game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's third (3rd) league play yellow card. Two (2) games automatic suspension for the games following such individual's fifth (5th) league play yellow card. One (1) game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's sixth (6th) league play yellow card. **NOTE:** A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a second (2nd) yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game, and those two (2) yellow cards are then added to such individual's previous total of league play yellow cards to determine whether additional game suspensions, if any, are required. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second (2nd) yellow in a single game will not be added to such individual's league play red card total.
 - b. **Red Cards** One (1) game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's first (1st) league play red card. Automatic suspension, pending a hearing, from all NTSSA-sanctioned activities following such individual's second (2nd) league play red card. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second (2nd) yellow card in a single game will not be added to such individual's league play red card total. **NOTE:** In cases where, during a single game, an individual receives a yellow card followed by a "straight red card" (as opposed to a red card issued solely as a result of a second yellow) both cards will be added to such individual's respective total of league play red and yellow cards and punished accordingly. 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 FIFA Laws of the Game, such A&D Committee may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Member Association or Playing League may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA.

- c. Seventh Card Any individual obtaining a seventh (7th) card in league play shall be immediately suspended pending a hearing with NTSSA A&D Committee [meaning any combination of yellow and red cards totaling seven (7)].
- .3 A "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for each tournament will be operated as follows:
- a. Yellow Cards One (1) game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's third (3rd) yellow card. Two (2) games suspension for the games following such individual's fifth (5th) yellow card of the tournament. One (1) game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's sixth (6th) yellow card of the tournament. **NOTE:** A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a second (2nd) yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of the game, and those two (2) yellow cards are then added to such individual's previous total of yellow cards for that tournament to determine whether additional game suspensions, if any, are required. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second (2nd) yellow in a single game will not be added to such individual's red card total for the tournament.
- b. Red Cards One (1) game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's first (1st) red card of the tournament. Automatic suspension, pending a hearing, from all NTSSA-sanctioned activities following such individual's second (2nd) red card of the tournament. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second (2nd) yellow card in a single game will not be added to such individual's red card total for the tournament. **NOTE:** In cases where, during a single game, an individual receives a yellow card followed by a "straight red card" (as opposed to a red card issued solely as a result of a second (2nd) yellow) both cards will be added to such individual's respective total of red and yellow cards for the tournament and punished accordingly. If Tournament Officials determine that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, such officials may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Tournament Officials may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA...
- c. Seventh Card Any individual obtaining a seventh (7th) card in tournament play shall be immediately suspended pending a hearing with NTSSA A&D Committee [meaning any combination of yellow and red cards totaling seven (7)].
- .4 The CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM prescribed by these rules defines the **minimum** disciplinary punishment to be taken by all Member Association, Playing Leagues and Tournament Officials. Nothing herein prevents Member Associations, Playing Leagues or Tournament Officials from enacting more severe sanctions. Each case should be judged on its own set of circumstances and degree of misconduct or violence, the latter of which must be dealt with swiftly and severely.
- .5 Any misconduct by a Coach falsifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee as well as to the Member Association and/or Playing League with which the coach is affiliated. The Member Association and/or Playing League shall promptly (within seven (7) days after receipt of the report) rule on the report and send its decision to the State A&D Committee. The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of the punishment, if any, in addition to that taken by the Member Association.
- .6 The State A&D Committee will make its decision based entirely upon the written reports before it, including that of the affected coach, should he or she submit a report. The Committee will not hold hearings unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one.
- .7 A coach whose conduct is **less than exemplary to his or her players, parents and spectators** will be firmly dealt with by the Member Association or Playing League involved with the State A&D Committee.

- .8 Game suspensions for Yellow and Red cards (as set forth above) are to be served by the player/coach/assistant coach at the next scheduled game (including league, playoff, championship, cup, and local or state tournament games) that such individual's team is involved in. A suspension imposed by these rules shall be recognized by all affiliated organizations after proper notification. The lack of a hearing or referee report on the offense shall not affect such individual's suspension.
- .9 All game suspensions must be reported immediately to the State A&D Committee. The Member Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials making the report will forward a copy of any referee's Misconduct Report(s) which underlie the suspension. The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of punishment, if any, in addition to that prescribed by the Member Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials, taking into consideration the severity of the misconduct.
- .10 The State A&D Committee will issue its decision based entirely upon the officials' reports and any other written reports before it, including that of the affected individual, should he or she submit a report. The State A&D Committee will not hold a hearing unless it, of its own violation, chooses to call one because of the nature of the case.
- .11 **Extreme Violent Conduct:**
Member Associations, Playing Leagues and/or Tournament Officials are directed to extend severe punishment to those players, coaches and assistant coaches guilty of extreme violent conduct while participating in a match and for violence toward any person or property after being ejected, while on the touchline, or approaching or leaving the game site.

18.4.0 Misconduct of Spectators

- .1 Each team (youth and adult) in NTSSA is responsible for the conduct of its spectators. The referee shall have the authority to caution and/or send off the coach or acting coach from the field for the misconduct of the spectators associated with the team. 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 State 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 patches.
 - 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 the police at game.
 - e. Revoke and/or refuse registration to the offending team.
 - f. Cause the spectator to be placed under a municipal "peace bond".

18.5.0 Misconduct and Punishment of Teams

.1 Youth Association Teams

- a. When, during the current soccer year, the players/coaches/assistant coaches of a given team have accumulated a total of seven (7) send-offs in league play (*including* red cards issued as a result of an individual receiving (2) two yellow cards in a single game) or any combination of cards totaling 25 the Member Association and/or Playing League shall notify the team and the State A&D Committee. The team will be fined \$100.00 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the seventh (7th) send-off or any combination of cards totaling 25. The coach and the players of said team may also be required

notified to appear before the committee to explain the team's continued misconduct. Failure of the Member Association or Playing League to notify the State A&D Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of a team's seventh (7th) send-off or any combination of cards totaling 25 will result in a fine of \$100.00 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 (2) yellow cards in a single game) Tournament Officials shall notify the team and the State A&D Committee. The team will be fined \$100.00 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the fourth (4th) 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 State A&D Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of a team's fourth (4th) send-off will result in a fine of \$100.00 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.

18.6.0 Individuals climbing on the fences, goals or in any other way damaging or defacing the MSA complexes will be brought before the Association's ethics committee, and face possible probation and/or suspension from participation in the league. **As per the City of Midland ordinance No. 9.5.15, coaches will also be responsible that parents do not bring animals to the MSA complexes except to assist the vision or hearing impaired.**

18.7.0 No individual under any form of coaching or playing suspension and/or probation may referee any MSA game during the duration of any such disciplinary sanction. The MSA will honor and enforce any disciplinary sanctions imposed by any other recognized Midland athletic or officiating organization.

18.8.0 An Appeals and Disciplinary ("A&D") Committee of MSA exists to hear all protests and allegations of misconduct requiring disciplinary action. Sub-committees of the A&D Committee may be formed to screen actions before the full Committee. Aggrieved parties may appeal a decision of the MSA A&D Committee to the MSA Executive Board, which is empowered to impose additional sanctions if the penalties imposed by the MSA A&D Committee are considered inadequate. All rules or ethics violations should be handled by the Commissioner, who forwards them to the A&D or Ethics Committees for disposition, as necessary. Complaints from the general membership must be in writing and signed.

18.8.1 On any complaints against coaches, the A&D and/or Ethics Committee shall notify the appropriate Vice-Commissioner of the scheduled hearing.

18.8.2 MSA will provide equitable and prompt hearing and appeal procedures to guarantee the rights of individuals to participate and compete and insure due process to the accused. In all hearings conducted, the parties shall be accorded:

- a. Notice of specific charges or alleged violations in writing and possible consequences if the charges are found to be true;
- 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 practical 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;
- 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; and,
- 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.

18.9.0 Any coach of an MSA team receiving his/her second caution (yellow card) during any season shall be automatically suspended from his/her team's next scheduled match. The foregoing does not prevent the A&D Committee from imposing additional sanctions on the coach.

18.10.0 Any coach or team whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to MSA while representing MSA in tournament and/or league play shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action by the MSA Commissioner who will notify the A&D Committee and NTSSA of such action for further action.

18.11.0 In all recreational age groups from U-5 through U-19, 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 MSA A&D Committee, and if found to be in violation of the offense, may be suspended from coaching.

18.12.0 No alcoholic beverages will be consumed or allowed on or near any practice or playing areas.

19.0.0 MANDATORY SUSPENSIONS

NTSSA has mandated that, at minimum, the following actions will be deemed to carry mandatory suspension from all soccer activities (i.e., coaching, playing, board member, etc.) for the time period indicated:

- (a) Recruiting-inducements, etc.: One year
- (b) Intentional violation of any NTSSA Rule: One year
- (c) Deliberately playing an ineligible player (i.e., unregistered, suspended, etc.):
One year
- (d) Improper paperwork (i.e., travel rosters, guest player forms, etc.): One year

Players, although sometimes acting on their own, are specifically targeted as "recruiting tools", so **mandatory** suspension for violations by youth players is not imposed by NTSSA, but all association A&D Committees are directed to review each case individually and, if suspension is warranted, to carry forward.

ADDENDUM

CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT

NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR COACHES

This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approval and accepted professional, ethical and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of the sport of soccer.

ARTICLE I RESPONSIBILITY 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. 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.

ARTICLE II RESPONSIBILITY TO NTSSA AND MEMBER ASSOCIATION

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 are 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.

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 the spirit of the law, they are derelict in their responsibility to players, Member Associations, NTSSA, and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive 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./Mrs./Ms Referee" and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gestures between officials, coach or player. Coaches must not incite players or spectators to 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 video tape or motion picture equipment to scout an opponent's regularly scheduled games for the purpose of recruitment 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/her 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, 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 (3) referrals are given in order to provide a professional and unbiased source of information.

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 manager 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 him/herself, his/her 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 toward players. The coach must confine him/herself to the coaching area. The attitude of the coach toward 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 game responsibility is his/her team.
6. Coaches should use their influence on friendly spectators that demonstrate intimidating behavior toward officials and opposing teams.

NTSSA PARENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Children have more need for example than for criticism.
2. Attempt to relieve the pressure of the competition, not increase it. A child is easily affected by outside influences.
3. 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.
4. The opponents are necessary friends. Without them, your child could not participate.
5. Applaud good plays by your team and by members of the opposing team.
6. Do not openly question an official's judgment and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity and sportsmanship.
7. Accept the results of each game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory and to turn defeat into victory by working toward improvement.
8. Remember your child is involved in organized sports for **THEIR** enjoyment, **NOT YOURS!** 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.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR USSF/NTSSA REGISTERED REFEREES

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.

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 my training refreshed. I will constantly strive to improve my own refereeing techniques and always accept sincere, constructive criticism from fellow referees or official assessors without malice.

I pledge that I will make myself available, whenever possible, for game assignments for which I am qualified.

If I am a State or National USSF referee, I acknowledge that my first responsibility is to State- or USSF-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.

I do hereby acknowledge my fellow referees' total authority over any matches that 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.

I understand that any criticism of fellow referees should be limited to constructive criticism in quiet, private referee-to-referee discussions, and never within hearing distance of players, coaches or spectators.

As a registered USSF/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.

I also acknowledge that if I am also a coach, player or spectator, my conduct toward and my respect for, my fellow referee calling 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.

I understand that I should wear only the approved USSF referee uniform with the current badge of the highest grade for which I am qualified, and that my uniform should be clean, neat and in good state of repair. I also understand that if I am a coach, I am not to wear my uniform while coaching my team.

I further understand that I should not partake of any type of alcoholic beverage before any game assignment, and I should never smoke, eat, or drink while actually officiating.

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.