



National Capital Soccer League

Rules and Procedures Manual

2018-2019

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Revision History

<i>Date</i>	<i>Version</i>	<i>Author/Editor</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1/2002	V 1	NCSL/Ray Greenberg	Original document
8/2002	V 2	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> yearly update of age groups and fees changed Division Coordinators to Division Scorekeepers per BOD vote, revised rule on dropping teams at the end of the season revised wording on 60 team limit per age group updated VYSA and MSYSA insurance information added SIAR program to appendix added FIFA wording on portable goals other minor edits
1/2003	V 3	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> added SIAR program to Section II, E. Entry Procedures clarified waiting list procedures added to the NCSL modifications to FIFA that U9 and U10 plays 7 V 7 and the requirement that referees must show cards to the coaches revised sit-out procedures for coaches and players after being ejected from a match revised wording on using a volunteer referee
8/2003	V-4	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Per BOD vote, changed number of teams disqualified at the end of season to five Revised wording on grievance procedures Clarified wording on calling in U9 and U10 scores Per BOD vote, added paragraph on New Club Application Rules and Procedures
2/2004	V 5	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Added clarified wording on tiebreaker procedures for divisions with an odd number of teams. Per BOD vote, added penalties for failure to sit-out for receiving a red card or accumulated points. Added wording on USSF decision on “Automatic Suspension following an Expulsion from a Match”, dated 11/14/03.
8/2004	V 6	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Age Divisions Revised Fees Clarified Tiebreaker Wording
1/2005	V 7	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Per BOD vote, revised Spring U19 structure size and U19 season completion prior to Memorial Day Weekend Per BOD vote, changed number of player transfers from 3 to 5 per seasonal year that are eligible for league play Per BOD vote, revised wording on requirement that clubs must attend all NCSL meetings Changed hotline phone number and information Per BOD vote, reinstated revised Special Team Assistant Referee (STAR) Program Rules and Procedures Per BOD vote, changed in length of U12 halves from 30 minutes to 35 minutes
8/2005	V 8	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Per BOD vote, changed U11 to play 8v8, and changed U11 field size, maximum & minimum number of rostered players, and added limit of two under aged players Per BOD vote, revised waiting list to allow teams a one time refusal to enter structure Per BOD vote, added 22 player roster for U17 and U19 teams Revised wording on play in accordance to FIFA LOTG introductory paragraph Moved USYSA age groups to Appendix Moved league and state fees to Appendix Revised Appendix Lightning Revised Section I – Official Roles and Responsibilities
1/2006	V 9	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Per BOD vote, changed the substitution rule to allow opposing team to substitute if team in favor is making a substitution

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Per BOD vote, both teams in all age groups are now required to take the same side of the field 3. Revised Appeal of R&D decision language 4. Revised STAR Program Rules & Procedure
7/2006	V 10	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revised document by removing subsections and reorganized policy subparagraphs 2. Added STAR description to officials and duties section 3. Per Board of Directors vote, changed the number of underage players allowed on a U11 team from two to three 4. Added requirement that clubs must notify the league if the returning team does not have a majority of the players from previous season's roster 5. Added requirement that clubs are not allowed to change or reassign a team's "N" number 6. Revised and clarified Waiting List procedures 7. Clarified wording on dropping teams in the lowest division with less than 10 teams 8. Updated wording on exceptions to structure for U9 and U10 teams 9. Updated requirement that all new teams participating in the NCSL must attend a mandatory introductory meeting 10. Added wording allowing rescheduling requests for ODP travel conflicts
2/2007	V 11	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Added new Section on Rostering Rules, Player and team transfers 2. Per Board of Directors vote, added small sided play for U12 effective Fall 2007 3. Per Board of Directors vote, revised field and goal dimensions for U9-U10 and U11-U12 4. Revised wording to clarify that teams are required to maintain a copies of Codes of Conduct for all team officials, players, and parents 5. Clarified requirements for teams transferring clubs between seasons 6. Per Board of Directors vote, added potential penalty for teams failure to have the required three STARS by start of league play
7/2007	V 12	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors vote, changed player transfer rules 2. Per NCSL Bylaws, added requirement that a club must enroll at least one team during a seasonal year 3. Added minimum number of players to start a game for all age groups
2/2008	V 13	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors vote, change the entry limitation rule for U10 teams 2. Per Board of Directors vote, added Club Pass for U9 and U10 teams 3. Added PCA certification requirement for coaches 4. Clarified wording on teams dropping from league 5. Clarified Disqualification wording for U9 and U10 age groups 6. Clarified wording on regionalized play for U9 and U10 7. Clarified wording on General Principles of Structure, formation of divisions, and up and down movement
7/2008	V 14	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors vote, change entry limitation rule for U11 teams 2. Clarified wording on waiting list 3. Clarified wording on team transfers 4. Clarified wording on when the referee is missing 5. Added Maryland Zero Policy Against Abuse to appendix

3/2009	V 15	Ray Greenberg (LP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors vote, added checking official state roster and player passes. 2. Per Board of Directors vote, added non-results oriented play through Fall U11 season. 3. Clarified wording on showing cards to coaches. 4. Clarified wording on carryover sit-outs.
7/2009	V16	Ray Greenberg (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors vote, changed the High School conflict rescheduling criteria for teams with greater than 18 players on their roster. 2. Per Board of Directors vote, changed the new club entry requirement to a minimum of five existing teams. 3. Added new club entry deadlines. 4. Clarified player transfer rules. 5. Revised STAR requirement.
2/2010	V17	Ray Greenberg (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defined how appointments are made to the Executive Committee. 2. Revise fee structure for coach attendance at PCA workshop. 3. Per Board of Directors vote, added wording on AGM election of officers. 4. Per Board of Directors vote, revised wording on filing a formal grievance. 5. Section XII (Rules and Discipline Committee) updated to conform to current practice. 6. As approved by the Executive Committee, NCSL Disciplinary Point System is expanded to include assessment of points for suspension of team affiliates.
7/2010	V18	Ray Greenberg (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors vote, change the new club admission criteria. 2. Revised wording on awarding trophies, Fall U11 teams are not awarded trophies. 3. Added PCA workshop reimbursement policy.
2/2011	V19	Ray Greenberg (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changed fax number to new service number. 2. Revised Calling in the Score Section, teams/scorekeepers cannot declare forfeits. 3. Revised STAR requirements. 4. Added job descriptions for PCA, STAR and New Team Program Administrators.
6/2011	V20	Ray Greenberg (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revised wording of Teams Transferring Clubs Between Seasons 2. Revised STAR requirements.
2/2012	V21	Ray Greenberg (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Numerous editorial changes and clarifications. 2. Adding wording to clarify R&D handling of club pass issues. 3. Per Board of Directors vote, revised club pass limit on number of players for U9 and U10. 4. Per Board of Directors approval, added requirement for U12 and older teams to add jersey numbers and player names to their online team page.
7/2012	V22	Barry Finkelstein (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Director approval, changed the maximum number of players on a team roster.
8/2012	V23	Richard Smith	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Numerous editorial changes and clarifications. 2. Adding wording to clarify club pass issues.
11/2012	V24	Barry Finkelstein (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Several editorial changes. 2. Clarification of Structure Development Procedures.
2/2013	V25	Barry Finkelstein (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, amended exception to structure development procedures to include a category for teams returning to play within NCSL from Region 1 or National league. 2. Clarified wording regarding guest player passes and documentation for sit outs.
6/2013	V26	Richard Smith (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, added Region 1 and National League play as exception to structure. 2. Added flex scheduling.

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Clarified rain outs to conform to practice. 4. Amended wait list to conform to practice. 5. Added fines for failing to enter U12 and older names and numbers to conform to practice. 6. Clarified ejection of players to conform to practice. 7. Clarified game forfeits if ineligible player to conform to practice. 8. Per Board of Directors approval, amended at various locations to increase to division size to 80 teams, allow for 3 teams per club for U9-12 and delaying disqualifying teams until U13 spring.
8/2013	V27	Barry Finkelstein (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per the NCSL Executive Committee's approval, amended Appendix XI STAR Program. New minimum age is 15 years old to serve as a STAR, regardless of certification grade.
12/2013	V28	Barry Finkelstein (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, amend U11/12 goal size. 2. Clarify spectator sideline, that club passes are only for U9 and U10, and the distribution of blue match cards and sit out forms, although distributed by the league to the clubs and the clubs to the teams, they can also be downloaded from the NCSL website.
3/2014	V29	Richard Smith (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, amended new club application rules.
7/2014	V30	Alan Paez (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Clarified timing for contacting league for game cancellations. 3. Amended Appendix XI STAR Program to conform with new grade structure for referees.
3/2015	V31	Alan Paez (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarify wording for structure requests.
4/2015	V32	Richard Smith	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, added club pass authority for U11-19 games. 2. Conformed U9-10 club pass description to 2012 Board vote. 3. Updated discipline section to conform to club pass rules. 4. Per Board of Directors approval, modified substitution rules.
8/2015	V33	Alan Paez (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarify Flex Scheduling Requests section. 2. Clarify wording in the Checking Official State Roster and Player Passes section. 3. Update Sit-Out Procedures section.
3/2016	V34	Alan Paez (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, amend the underage rule.
8/2016	V35	Alan Paez	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise to include WAGS merger changes
3/2017	V36	Alan Paez (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, allowed unlimited club pass for U11 Girls.
8/2017	V37	Alan Paez (DT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, adopt U.S. Soccer mandates on U9-U10 build-out line, field/goal size, and punting/drop kicking restrictions; U11 and U12 roster sizes, 9 v 9, and field/goal size. 2. Per Board of Directors approval, eliminated wait listing of teams. 3. Revise scorekeeper info regarding division and age group scorekeeper duties.
8/2018	V38	Richard Smith	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Board of Directors approval, conform U11G procedures to match U11 Open Division procedures. 2. Clarify wording for U9-11 Structure Considerations and U18-19 potential for consolidation. 3. Per R&D Committee, clarify working of sit-out requirements for club pass players.

Section I Officials and Their Duties

President

- Preside over all Board of Directors meetings
- Chair the Executive Committee meetings
- Preside over the structure committee meetings
- Chair grievance and appeal hearings
- Provide day to day guidance and direction to the league administrator
- Leads the New Team Administrator Meeting
- Appoint individuals to serve as age group commissioners
- Appoint the R&D Chairman
- Appoint the league registrars
- Appoint special committee chairperson and members
- Interface with other leagues and WAGS

Vice President

- Serve as the chair of the Executive Committee in the absence of the President
- Preside over the Board of Directors meetings in the absence of the President
- Chair grievance and appeal hearings when designated by the President
- Provide advice and counsel to the league President
- Serve as a member of the Structure Committee
- Serve as needed on the Rules and Discipline Committee
- Chair as needed the New Club Admissions Committee
- Provide day to day guidance and direction to the league administrator in the absence of the President
- Carry out other duties as assigned by the President

Treasurer

- Prepare budget for each fiscal year
- Verify and pay all bills, including referee, state registration, and office
- Check forms and make sure each club has paid all fees for fall and spring seasons
- Keep Quickbook records up to date
- Prepare reports for the Executive Committee and Board of Directors
- Provide day to day guidance and direction to the league administrator on financial matters
- Send information to accountant advisors for income tax and audit reviews
- Serve as a member of the Structure Committee
- Carry out other duties as assigned by the President

Secretary

- Record and publish minutes of all NCSL Executive Committee & Board of Director meetings
- Record total number of votes per club each season
- Serve as a member of the Structure Committee
- Carry out other duties as assigned by the President

Administrator

- Run the day to day operations of the league
- Resolve schedule issues prior to start of season
- Reschedule all matches during the season, as needed
- Answer questions and solve problems via email and phone
- Interface with officers, board members, committee chairpersons, scorekeepers, assignors, and the state associations

- Collect all forms from each club, verify accuracy and completeness
- Prepare information for distribution to the Structure Committee
- Provide administrator support for all Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings
- Update and maintain the NCSL web site
- Ensure all scores and standings are correct and posted on the web site
- Manage trophy order and distribution
- Maintain the league calendar and schedule league meetings
- Serve as a non-voting member of the Structure Committee
- Carry out other duties as assigned by the President

Executive Committee

- Executive Committee membership is comprised of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, U9-U11 Commissioner, U12-U14 Commissioner, U15-U20 Commissioner, R&D Chairman, and four club representatives, appointed by the NCSL President, two from each state (VA and MD). The league administrator serves on the Executive Committee as a non-voting member.
- Executive Committee meets on a monthly basis and reviews the running of the league. The Executive Committee establishes the monthly meeting dates in advance and the league administrator sends out notices of upcoming meetings. A quorum of six members is required to conduct business.
- Develops and reviews all proposals and motions that will be considered prior to submittal to the full Board of Directors.
- Review and resolve issues that impact the operation of the league.
- Members serve on the Structure Committee.
- The four club representatives are nominated by the NCSL President and approved by a majority vote of the NCSL Executive Committee. Club Representatives serve a two-year term with one Maryland club representative and one Virginia club representative being appointed in the even year and the other Maryland and Virginia club representatives being appointed in the odd year. The appointment starts at the first Executive Committee meeting held after the Annual General Meeting and ends at the second AGM. The NCSL President can re-nominate any club representative to serve on the Executive Committee when his or her term expires.
- If any member of the Executive Committee resigns prior to the expiration of their term, the President will nominate a replacement and the replacement will be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. An appointee can be removed at any time by a majority vote of the NCSL Executive Committee.

R&D Chairman

- The R&D Chairman is appointed by the NCSL President
- Selects individuals to serve on the R&D Committee
- Investigates and conducts hearings, as appropriate, to determine, assess and enforce penalties when violations of NCSL rules or Codes of Conduct may have occurred
- Resolve protests based on alleged misapplication of FIFA Laws of the Game and appeals concerning referee actions or alleged violation of NCSL rules which may be appealed
- Maintains records of all cautions and ejections (and the associated point count) assessed against players and team officials
- Reviews and makes decisions on forfeits
- Reviews any game terminated prior to its conclusion and provides the league with an official determination of the outcome of the game
- Reviews rules and discipline policies and procedures, including the penalties for misconduct, and recommends changes as necessary

Age Group Commissioners

- The three (3) Age Group Commissioners are appointed by the NCSL President. They act as advocates for clubs and teams in their respective age groups: (1) U9-U11, U12-U14, U15-U20.
- Make decisions rescheduling conflicts, and application of NCSL rules
- Serve as members of the Structure Committee
- Act as the point-of-contact for all inquiries regarding league structure
- Communicate with club representatives and other club officials as necessary to enforce the letter and spirit of the NCSL Codes of Conduct
- Serve as needed on the R&D Committee
- Investigate complaints and make recommendations about field suitability

Special Team Assistant Referee (STAR) Program Administrator

- The STAR Administrator is appointed by the NCSL President
- Works with the paid STAR Administrator to administer the STAR Program and reports to the Executive Committee
- Responds to STAR related questions from clubs and teams
- Works with the State referee associations to ensure scheduling of STAR classes
- Manages, monitors and ensures team compliance for U12 and U13 teams
- Assesses fines, awards forfeits or proposes refusal for reentry into league, as appropriate, following NCSL policy to teams for failure to meet the STAR requirements
- Communicates fines assessed to the Club Representatives and communicates unpaid fines to the League Administrator
- Reviews STAR rules and discipline policies and procedures, including the penalties for misconduct, and recommends changes as necessary

New Team Program Administrator

- The New Team Program Administrator is appointed by the NCSL President
- Coordinates with the League Administrator to schedule a meeting date prior to each season
- Coordinates with the League Administrator to identify new teams to the league
- Advertises, both by email and web posting, the meeting date and teams required to attend the New Team Administrator Meeting
- Monitors attendance at the New Team Administrator Meeting
- Assesses fines, as appropriate, following NCSL policy to teams for failure to send a representative to the New Team Administrator Meeting
- Communicates fines assessed to the affected Club Representatives and communicates unpaid fines to the League Administrator

Club Representatives

The club representatives are the backbone of the NCSL. They serve important functions in both NCSL and their member clubs:

- Handle all communication between their coaches, players, officers and volunteers and NCSL. (All telephoning to the NCSL office is done by club representative. Players, coaches, club volunteers, and parents should not call NCSL.)
- Serve as the NCSL Board of Directors and decide as a body all major NCSL rules and procedures
- Bring the needs of their clubs to NCSL and, by extension, to the Maryland and Virginia state organizations
- Receive all information provided by NCSL and disseminate it to all their coaches, club officers, volunteers, and players
- Coordinate functions between their clubs and NCSL, such as registration, rainouts, rescheduling, rules and discipline matters, and all the paperwork and fees

- Acts as intermediary in communications between Rules & Discipline Committee and teams within their club
- Keep track of everything that is going on between club and the league
- Answer questions and solve problems
- Your club representative's job is to answer your questions and help you with NCSL matters. Call him or her when you have questions not answered in this manual.

Age Group Scorekeepers

- Age Group Scorekeepers are selected by the league administrator (Age Group scorekeepers have emerged over the years as another chain of NCSL support and information)
- Receive game scores from the winning teams (unless a tie, whereby both teams report score), along with other important information such as significant incidents and incomplete games
- Receive referee coverage information on each game in their age group
- Teams and/or scorekeepers cannot declare a forfeit, they report the score and what occurred and the league determines whether there should be a forfeit
- Record scores on the NCSL web site

NOTE: Winning team calls in the score before 8 p.m., but in case of a tie or incomplete game, both teams call their Age Group Scorekeeper.

Team Sportsmanship Liaison (TSL)

- The spectator sidelines need to be managed by a responsible party other than a team coach. Therefore, each team will select a Team Sportsmanship Liaison (TSL) prior to each NCSL match
- Prior to each game the TSL from both teams will identify themselves to each other and to the referee
- Prior to each game the TSL will discuss with the referee and coaches what role the TSL will take in the event the sidelines begin to negatively impact the match or the referee's ability to do his/her job
- Ensure the team spectators/parents observe the spectator line
- Be the "cooler head" should sideline behavior become extreme
- Be the first point of contact should the referee feel he/she needs help due to inappropriate sideline behavior
- In the event an incident occurs which requires R&D involvement, the TSL will attend the hearings

Special Team Assistant Referee (STAR)

The NCSL STAR Program provides trained certified assistant referees to U12 and U13 matches. Each U12 and U13 team must identify at least two STARs, by the first game of the season who are willing and able to serve as assistant referees.

Section II Definitions

Club

A club is a member organization of the NCSL that consists of at least one active team. Any club that fails to enroll at least one team during a seasonal year will have their membership terminated.

Age Group

An age group is a group of teams based upon the birth date of players on the teams. The birth dates are calculated from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Each age group includes teams organized to compete in one of two divisions (open or girls). Refer to the age group chart in Appendix I. NCSL age groups will be U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18, and U19 (in some cases, the older divisions may be combined). The age of a team is determined by the birth date of the oldest player, unless the team is playing on a provisional roster with approval from the President.

Division

With the exception of U9, U10, U11 (Fall), a division is a subgroup within an age group formed from teams with similar competitive levels for league play. U9 and U10 divisions are formed geographically with less regard for strict competitive level. In the Fall U11, clubs are asked to self-select one of three “bands” of competitive play, and divisions are formed within those bands, based on geography and balance.

Official State Roster

A team’s Official State Roster is the roster of all registered players approved and deemed eligible to play for that team by the official state youth soccer association in which that team plays (MSYSA, VYSA, or WVYSA). The Official State Roster is distinguished from the game-day roster, which is a subset of the Official State Roster (except where club passes are used).

Team

A team is a group of players sponsored by a club that competes in a division of an age group of the NCSL. With the exception of players participating using a club pass, a **player is eligible to play for only one NCSL team per season** (additionally, although a club pass may be used, even with a club pass, **players may play for only one NCSL team per day**).

The minimum number of players on a team roster is as follows: U13-U19 teams- 11 players, U11-U12 teams- 9 players, and U9-U10 teams- 7 players. The maximum number of players on a team’s Official State Roster is as follows: U14-U19 teams- 22 players; U13 teams- 18 players, U11-U12 teams- 16 players, and U9-U10 teams- 12 players.

The majority of players on the Official State Roster constitute a “team” in any dispute involving the team’s club affiliation or position in the NCSL Division Structure. Prior to the beginning of a new playing season, the majority of the players on the Official State Roster as of the date of the last game of the previous season constitute the “team.” Except as noted above, teams will be defined by their state associations and US Youth Soccer.

All teams must present a game-day roster prior to each NCSL match (the NCSL blue game card will serve as the official game-day roster). Although U14-U19 teams may have 22 players on their Official State Roster at any given time during the seasonal year, no more than 18 of those players may be listed on the game-day roster for any particular match. Only players listed on the game-day roster for a particular match may play in that match.

Structure

Structure is the placement of teams in divisions within age groups. Placement will be made by the Structure Committee in accordance with the procedures defined in Section VII.

Section III Entry Requirements and Procedures

How to Enter Teams

Clubs received their Fall applications at the end-of-season June meeting and Spring applications at the end-of-season November meeting. Teams apply for entry to the league for the Fall and Spring seasons by returning all applications through their club, together with one check for fees. Each club should return all filled-out applications along with the club membership statement, fees and fees form in person, or by mail, prior to the stated deadline. Mailed application materials must be received by the deadline listed on the NCSL calendar at: NCSL, P.O. Box 11458, Alexandria, VA 22312.

Team Limits

There shall not be a limit on the number of teams any club may enter. Clubs may submit as many teams within an age group as the club can support with fields and referees. The Executive Committee has ultimate authority to approve or reject a team application based on field and referee limitations.

Mandatory Team Manager Meeting

All new teams wishing to participate in NCSL must attend a mandatory introductory meeting. An attendee can represent only one team. Any team failing to attend the mandatory meeting will be fined \$250. This fine must be paid to the league prior to the start of the NCSL season. For these purposes, a “new team” is defined as one that did not play in NCSL in either of the two previous seasons. For these purposes, teams with less than a majority of returning players constitute new teams.

E-mail Addresses are Required

E-mails are the primary means of communication between the league and its clubs and teams. All teams are required to submit a valid e-mail address on their application for league play. Also, all club representatives are required to submit a valid e-mail address.

Player Names and Jersey Numbers Required

All U12 and older teams are required to enter their player names and jersey numbers online on their NCSL webpage. Any U12 and older team failing to enter the player names and jersey numbers in advance of the first weekend of play will be fined \$50. This is optional for all U9-U11 teams.

STAR Program

Mandatory participation for U12 and U13 teams. Each team must have at least two certified STARs in order to play in the NCSL. (See Appendix XI)

Field and Referees are Required

Conditions of entry to the league are a field submission in proportion to the number of teams entered and a sufficient number of currently certified referees to cover games to be played in that area.

One Field for Each Four Teams

Fields are required for Sunday play, and at least two Saturdays, or (if the Executive Committee approves) on weekday evenings in lieu of Saturdays. Clubs must submit one field for every four teams or part thereof in the league.

If a club does not provide the required number of fields, the club's teams will play games that cannot be scheduled on its fields, at the opponent's fields. The submission of a letter from another club allowing specified outside teams to play on that club's fields will suffice so long as the club writing the letter has sufficient extra field space. A club not in compliance with the field requirements will not be permitted to enter another team in the NCSL until the club comes into compliance.

Clubs must also submit fields for rain dates (as listed on the NCSL calendar). Those not submitting rain date fields will lose home games on those dates.

All clubs must from time to time host neighboring teams so that NCSL might schedule games in pairs for efficiency of referee assignment.

Due Dates for Fields

Fields are due by the deadline, electronically submitted, for the Fall and Spring seasons. If no submission

is received, all schedule matrices will be changed to have that club's teams play all games on opponent's fields, or the club's number of registered teams may be reduced.

Field Standards

Field (pitch) and goal size must be certified by the club representatives as meeting NCSL standards:

- All fields must be rectangular.
- For U13 and older age groups, fields must be at least 100 yards long by 50 yards wide, and goals shall be approximately 8 feet high and 24 feet wide.

Fields must also provide safe playing conditions. Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may be used only if they satisfy this requirement. Should a referee not allow a game to be played because of unsafe field conditions (non-weather related), and the unsafe conditions are confirmed by the league, the home team may forfeit the game and all subsequent games until such time as the unsafe conditions have been corrected and verified by a league representative. Fields should have only one set of touchlines. In case of more than one set of lines because of use by football or intramural soccer, the outermost set of touchlines will be used.

U9 - U10 Field Dimensions:

- Width: 35-50 yards
- Length: 55-75 yards
- Penalty area: 12-14 yards out from each goal post along the end line and 12-14 yards out from the end line onto the field
- Goal area: 4-6 yards out from each goal post along the end line and 6 yards out from the end line onto the field
- Penalty spot: 10 yards from the end line
- Radius for penalty arc: 8 yards
- Goals: 6.5 ft high and 18.5 ft wide
- Build-Out Line: Midpoint of midfield and penalty area.

No field will be deemed out of compliance if a home team or club is unable to line a field with a build-out line as described. In such case, other safe means such as pennies or soft cones may be placed on the touchlines off the pitch to mark the build-out lines.

U11 – U12 Field Dimensions:

- Width: 45-60 yards
- Length: 70-85 yards
- Penalty area: 14 yards out from each goal post along the end line and 14 yards out from the end line onto the field
- Goal area: 5-6 yards out from each goal post along the end line and 5-6 yards out from the end line onto the field
- Penalty spot: 10 yards from the end line
- Radius for penalty arc: 8 yards
- Goals: 6.5 ft high and 18.5 ft wide, or 7 ft high and 21 ft wide; goals must be of same size at both ends of the field

Penalty Area Rule For Coaches and Spectators

No coach, assistant, or spectator shall position themselves further from the halfway line than the top of the penalty area. Coaches and assistants must remain on their side of the halfway line on the teams' side of the field. Coaches are responsible for anyone on their side out of an appropriate position and any interference with the play of the ball or game.

Teams Dropping from League

Teams dropping from the league after drop date as published in the NCSL calendar will forfeit their league fees as well as their deposits for player registration. The drop date is reported on the NCSL website. Additional penalties may be assessed by the Board of Directors. The officers may act to fill a vacancy if a suitable entry can be found.

Codes of Conduct Required

All teams must accept the NCSL leaders, players and parents Codes of Conduct found in the Appendix. Each team is required to have signed Codes of Conduct by all team officials, players and parents before the first game each Fall and retain the signed Codes of Conduct for the seasonal year. If a new leader or player joins a team during the seasonal year, the team will ensure that each new leader, player, and parent sign a copy of the Code of Conduct. Failure of a player, team official, or parent to read or sign the applicable Code of Conduct does not absolve such person of their duty to abide by its requirements.

It is recommended that signing of all three Codes of Conduct take place in conjunction with the preseason team meeting and that the Codes of Conduct serve as a basis for a discussion of sportsmanship and fair play.

Assessing Teams for League Entry

The NCSL can, at its discretion, refuse entry to a team if it is determined that such an entry will not be in the best interests of the NCSL. Factors which will be considered in assessing a team include, but are not limited to the number of games previously forfeited by the team, the number of state registered players on the team's roster as of the date of application, the number of disciplinary points accumulated by the team in previous seasons, and the findings and recommendations of the R&D Committee about that team.

In addition, whether the team has entered the NCSL previously and then has withdrawn after scheduling has begun may be taken into account. Acceptance to the NCSL may be refused to teams that the league feels intend to gain entry to be eligible for cup competition but who intend not to play all games as scheduled.

NOTE: Teams must play a minimum of 85% of their games to be considered for trophies or future league play. Teams consistently forfeiting will be subject to disciplinary action by the R&D Committee. (For example, the club's teams could be denied entry.)

Section IV League Procedures

Election of Officers

The NCSL President shall appoint an individual(s) to serve as the nominating committee chairman 60 days prior to the AGM.

- a. The Nominating Committee shall solicit volunteers interested in serving as an office of the league.
- b. The Nominating Committee should solicit one or more individuals for each position up for election at the AGM.
- c. After securing the consent of the persons nominated, the Nominating Committee shall report the name of the candidates to the Executive Committee no later than 30 days prior to the AGM and shall distribute nominee names and qualification information (if any) to the Club Representatives not less than 25 days prior to the AGM.
- d. The names of individuals other than those nominated by the Nominating Committee may be placed in nomination by written notice addressed to the NCSL Secretary no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the Annual Meeting. The notice of nomination shall contain the name of

the individual being nominated, club or league affiliation, office for which they are being nominated, evidence that the individual consents to be nominated, and a brief statement of the nominee's experience and qualifications. Individuals may nominate themselves by providing the above information.

- e. The NCSL Administrator shall, in the notice of the AGM, notify all club representatives of the candidates for office nominated by the Nominating Committee or submitted to the league Secretary, along with qualification statements of all nominees not originally submitted by the Nominating Committee. Such notice shall be made no less than 10 days prior to the AGM.
- f. No nominations may be made from the floor on the date of the Annual Meeting, except for offices for which no one has been nominated in advance.

Elections shall take place each year at the AGM. The nominated candidate receiving the highest number of votes for each office shall be declared elected. In the absence of any opposing candidates, the entire slate may be elected with one vote. Voting may, but need not be, by ballot. Voting is weighted by the number teams a club has had participating in the league during the current and previous seasons, each club gets 1 vote per participating team per season

NCSL Meetings

All league meeting locations will be announced well in advance. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. The meeting schedule can be found in the calendar on the NCSL website. Club representatives are the NCSL Board of Directors and decide important policy matters. Attendance at all NCSL Board of Directors meetings are mandatory, every member club must have a representative present at each meeting. The NCSL will accept a representative by proxy if a written authorization is sent to the league office by 4:00 p.m. or delivered to the Secretary by hand prior to the Roll Call on the day of the league meeting.

If a member club does not have representation at two consecutive meetings it will result in the club being fined \$200. The fine will be added to the fees required to enter teams for the next season of play.

Offering of Motions

Motions submitted shall be scheduled for consideration as new business at the next regular meeting, providing they are submitted as follows:

- The complete written motion shall be in the NCSL office at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting at which it is to be considered.
- Motions must be submitted by a board member who shall be known as the motion's author, and must designate a second board member who has agreed to act as seconder.
- Items shall be considered in the order they are received at the NCSL office.
- The author and seconder of each motion shall be recognized in succession.
- Motions complying with these submission rules shall be known as "REGULAR MOTIONS".
- Voting may, but need not be, by ballot. Voting is weighted by the number teams a club has had participating in the league during the current and previous seasons, each club gets 1 vote per participating team per season

Motions may be offered that are not properly submitted providing:

- That they are submitted in writing prior to the meeting's being called to order.
- That the President of the NCSL consents to hear the motion, and that the schedule permits.
- All motions so offered and considered are known as "SPECIAL MOTIONS".

Amendments to Motions

- All motions may be amended from the floor.
- Amendments must be prepared in writing. The author must read the proposed amendment from

the floor, then, assuming there is a second, deliver the proposed amendment to the chair for reference during debate.

- Amendments that are acceptable to primary motion authors and seconders needn't be debated.
- There shall be no amendments to amendments.

Other Procedures

- The President, in preparing the agenda, shall establish a scheduled adjournment time. This time shall not be extended, except for consideration of REGULAR MOTIONS.
- After the Author and seconder of the motion have spoken, the Chair may end debate at any time, so long as equal numbers have spoken for and against the motion, assuming any members are seeking recognition. However, if time permits, the Chair shall extend debate until each member wishing to speak has spoken once on any given piece of business.
- The same debate closure rules are applicable to amendments, except that the seconder needn't be recognized.

Suspension of Rules

The previous considerations shall apply for all routine considerations. However, any member may petition the assembly to suspend the rules. This shall be done as follows:

- At any time after a meeting is called to order a member may rise and say "I rise to petition the board to suspend the rules".
- The Chair shall respond, "For what purpose do you seek suspension of the rules?"
- The petitioner must respond with one of the following replies:
 - a) "For the purpose of consideration of a motion concerning...(state the thrust of the motion)."
 - b) "For the purpose of extending debate beyond the scheduled adjournment hour."
- The petitioner may speak briefly in explanation of his petition.
- The petition must be seconded to be considered.
- There is no debate on suspension of the rules.
- Suspension of the rules requires a 2/3 majority vote.
- Any motions, amendments, etc. submitted during a suspension of the rules must be written.

Calling the NCSL Office

Thorough reading of this manual will answer most questions. Coaches and managers can have other questions answered by their club representative. The league office must limit its dealings to club representatives, league officers, commissioners, division scorekeepers, and committee chairpersons.

Office Hours

The league office is open to phone calls Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon unless the press of work demands otherwise. The number to use at these hours is (703) 385-1608. In the off-season, these hours may vary. The league operates an answering machine 24 hours a day. The NCSL fax number is (703) 831-8948. For league-wide announcements and/or weather related bulletins check the league website first. If web access is not available, call the HOTLINE, (703) 791-2656. The HOLTLINE is intended for outgoing announcements only. Phone calls to and messages left on the HOTLINE will not be returned. You may also send an e-mail to administrator@ncsl-soccer.com. The website address is www.ncsl-soccer.com.

The office is open extra hours on game days when weather conditions warrant. If you cannot reach the league office in person, please leave a voice message or e-mail a message to administrator@ncsl-soccer.com. Voice mail and e-mail are constantly monitored.

Referee Scheduling

Only the administrator, NCSL president, age group commissioners, or the R&D chairman may phone the referee assignors. If a change is necessary or a problem game is coming up, have your club representatives contact the league. In no case may a team or club add extra officials to a game without the league's knowledge.

Insurance

Each team has purchased liability, accident, and medical insurance for its members. See the Insurance attachments in the Appendix for further information. In VA & DC, claim forms may be requested by calling the VYSA office at (540) 693-1430. For MD forms, call the MSYSA office at (410) 768-5401.

Licensure

Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia offer coaches training courses to receive the USSF D, E, or F licenses. National licensing courses are offered several times a year. In order to be eligible for a national license at the A, B, C levels, you must have completed the course just below it in the alphabet. (A is the highest Level.) Higher licenses require increased levels of knowledge, skill, and fitness. The D, E, and F courses are offered locally. For more information contact your state association.

Cup Play

In Virginia, U15 and older play in the Fall. U14 and younger play in the Spring. All Maryland teams play state cup in the Spring. Cup play takes precedence over NCSL games. Although most league scheduling is done to avoid Cup conflicts notify the NCSL Administrator of any State Cup conflicts immediately. To receive State Cup applications contact your state administrator.

Olympic Development Program

Maryland and Virginia youth soccer state associations each pick several boys and girls Olympic Development Program (ODP) teams yearly. The players go on to compete for slots on regional and national ODP teams.

Tournament Conflicts

REMINDER: NCSL teams are not able to travel to tournaments during the NCSL season on either playing dates OR rain dates without incurring a forfeit. No exceptions will be granted.

Section V Player and Team Transfers

Single Team Limit

A player may appear on the Official State Roster for only one NCSL team during any given season. Additionally, although a club pass may be used, even with a club pass, **players may play for only one NCSL team per day.**

Player Transfers

A player wishing to transfer or multi-roster onto the Official State Roster of another NCSL team after the season start date (listed on the NCSL Calendar of Events) and retain eligibility for league play must fit into one of the following categories:

- The releasing team, or primary team, is not registered to participate in the NCSL for the current season.
- The player's release was completed, with required registrar approvals, prior to the season start date (league participation of the releasing team does not matter in this case.)
- Specific waiver granted by the NCSL President.

Players that transfer or multi-roster after the season start date that do not fit into one of the above categories, are not eligible for league play (but may be eligible as a club pass player, for State Cup, or for tournaments).

No more than five transfer players on the Official State Roster are eligible for league play per year without approval of the President.

Team Transfers

A team that transfers to another club shall not lose its position in the structure.

Reforming Teams Between Seasons

US Youth Soccer rules permit teams to reform between the Spring and Fall seasons. NCSL will recognize any team consisting of the majority of players from the previous season's Official State Roster as of the date of the last game. A team that reforms, but does not consist of a majority of players from the previous season's roster, must notify the league and request that they be allowed to maintain the team number and position in structure. This request must be approved by and submitted through the club representative. In order to maintain the team number and position in structure, the team must demonstrate some continuity between the previous team and the newly formed team such as a returning coach or a majority of returning players. The request will only be honored if in the opinion of the commissioners and officers, the team will be competitive in their previous structure position; if the request is denied, the team will be identified as a new team and assigned a new team number.

All assigned league "N" numbers are property of the league. NCSL expressly forbids the changing, altering or reassigning of team numbers by anyone, under any circumstance. Only the league administrator has the authority to assign or reassign numbers to teams. If a club's team leaves the league for any unauthorized reason, the club must notify the league immediately and surrender the team's "N" number.

Teams Transferring Clubs Between Seasons

The following documents must be submitted by the gaining club representative to the NCSL State Commissioner 7 days prior to the field form submission due date for the next season:

1. Letter/e-mail from losing club acknowledging that the team is leaving their club and a statement that the team is in good standing, or stating specific financial and/or disciplinary issues with the team either at the club or league level. This document must be signed by the club President and club NCSL Representative.
2. Letter/e-mail from gaining club stating that the team has been accepted by the gaining club; gaining club states that they will have sufficient fields and if appropriate, referees. This document must be signed by the club President and club NCSL Representative.
3. Team roster from end of most recent season.
4. Letter/statement signed by majority of families from roster in #3 expressing their intent and agreement to move team to gaining club and be part of that team.

In order for a team to transfer clubs and play the next season, the team must be submitted for league play by the posted due date. Therefore, if the transfer is not approved prior to team entries and fees due date, the receiving club needs to be sure the losing club has submitted the team for league play and arrangements have been made to compensate the losing club for league payments made.

Section VI Grievance Procedures

Any member club, club officer, director, agent, team or player associated with a member club, within seven days of the written publication or verbal notification of information concerning a decision of any league officer or state commissioner, who feels aggrieved by such decision and is desirous of having a grievance heard, may submit a formal grievance. The grievance must be submitted via e-mail to the NCSL President. In addition, the grievance must be sent to the NCSL President c/o NCSL Office, P.O. Box 11458, Alexandria, VA 22312. The grievance must cite the remedy requested and include a check in the amount of \$200 payable to NCSL.

The President will review grievance for determination of proper filing and the nature of the matter being grieved. If the President determines the grievance is validly submitted, he will initiate action to resolve the issue. This may be accomplished by consulting other officers or club representatives by phone, personally or by holding a hearing. The President will be the judge of which method of resolution will be used.

A Grievance Committee will consist of the president of NCSL who will preside (or any other officer appointed by the president) and club representatives who will hear the grievance within 14 days of the receipt of the grievance. A quorum for the meeting is three; the presiding officer will count towards a quorum but will only vote in a tie situation.

If the grievance is sustained, the check will be returned; if the grievance is denied, the check will be deposited to the general fund of the league.

If the aggrieved party remains dissatisfied after having exhausted all requirements concerning grievances, or, if not having exhausted all requirements concerning grievances, if he invokes the aid of the courts of any state or the United States, should the person bringing the action not prevail in such court action, he shall then be liable for all expenses incurred by NCSL in defending such action including, but not limited to, the following:

- Court Costs
- Attorneys' fees
- Reasonable compensation for time spent by NCSL employees in responding and defending against allegations in the action, including responses to discovery and court appearances
- travel expenses
- expenses of any special meeting(s) necessitated by the action

NOTE: There is a difference between a grievance and a protest. Grievances concern league policy; protests concern game situations.

Section VII Structure Development Procedures

General Principles of the Structure

In determining the Structure, the following general principles will apply:

- Within age groups, divisions will be filled from the top down
- At the completion of a season, the Structure for the following season will be set based upon final standings
- It is assumed that teams competing in the previous season will compete in the following season. If a team does not compete the following season the commissioners and officers will adjust the Structure, using their best judgment to ensure competitive play
- Teams normally do not move up or down more than one division from one season to the next

- Teams in the U9 through U14 are expected to play both the fall and spring seasons. If a team drops out and later applies for re-entry into the NCSL (unless it drops out to play in a Region 1 league or the National League), that team may be considered a new team.
- The Structure Committee will consider whether a team's performance in a given season was achieved with club pass players in a manner that is inconsistent with the spirit of the club pass allowance.

Structure Requests

The Structure Committee on a case-by-case basis will review all special request and situations not specifically covered in the above listed general principles. The overriding guiding principle of structure is to insure maximum competitiveness for each age group and division. Requests for exceptions to Structure procedures must be submitted through the online system forms and accompany a team's application for league play. Oral or email communications with commissioners and officers will not be considered.

Grievances

No grievances will be allowed regarding Division Structure. Questions, complaints or other official comments concerning the Structure must be submitted in writing through club representatives.

Formation of Divisions in an Age Group

Teams will be formed into age groups based upon the birth date of the oldest player. U11 and above age groups will be subdivided into divisions consisting of 10 teams wherever practical. For age groups with an odd number of teams (not evenly divided by 10), divisions of 12, 11, 9, 8, 7, or 6 will be formed based on performance as determined by the structure committee.

Moving Up, Moving Down

Placement in divisions for age groups previously structured into all 10 team divisions will primarily be based upon performance of the team during the previous season. The Structure Committee's general expectation is typically to utilize the following procedure:

- In the First Division, the 9th and 10th place finishers will move to the Second Division. The 1st and 2nd place finishers in the Second Division will move to the First Division. The 8th, 9th, and 10th place finishers in the Second Division will move to the Third Division.
- In Divisions Three and lower, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers will move to the higher division and the 8th, 9th and 10th place finishers will move to the lower division. When there is no lower division, no teams will move down.

Placement in divisions for age groups not previously structured into all 10 team divisions will primarily be based upon performance of the team during the previous season. The Structure Committee will strive to move teams up and down as above but the simple 3 up/3 down movement will most likely not always be possible. Additionally, the Structure Committee will consider whether a team's performance in a given season was achieved with club pass players in a manner that is inconsistent with the spirit of the club pass allowance.

Tiebreakers

NCSL tiebreaker procedures apply where necessary to determine movement. Tiebreaker procedures are in Section XI.

Playing Up

A team, with the permission of the NCSL President, may play up one age group. The team will be placed

in the most appropriate division of the higher age group as determined by the structure committee. Should the team elect to return to its own age group, the team will be placed in the most appropriate division in its age group, as determined by the structure committee.

NCSL may offer a team the opportunity to play in a higher age group. The team will be placed in the most appropriate division of the higher age group as determined by the structure committee. The team may elect to return to its own age group, the team will be placed in the most appropriate division in its age group, as determined by the structure committee.

Exceptions to the Structure Development Procedures

The NCSL will continue non-results oriented play through the Fall U11 season:

- No scores or standings will be published for U9, U10 and Fall U11. Once the Fall U11 season is completed, scores from those divisions may be published at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- Efforts will be made to ensure that teams have appropriately competitive matches and do not play each other twice during these introductory seasons.
- For U9 and U10, the structure committee will make every effort to have league play regionalized to minimize travel times, but will work with the club representatives generally to attempt to match games to be played against relatively equivalent opponents. This depends on the clubs participating and the number of teams each season. The concept is to have Maryland teams play Maryland teams and Virginia teams play Virginia teams. However, in some cases, travel times will be lessened by crossing state boundaries.
- For the Fall U11 age group, clubs are asked to self-select one of three “bands” of competitive play, and divisions are formed within those bands, based on geography and balance.
- All other rules of league play remain unchanged.

The High School age group (U15 and above) structure will be determined in accordance with the general procedures above. However, it is recognized that with teams opting to sit-out a season due to conflicts with high school play, the number of teams qualifying for a particular division in the Structure may differ from the normal structure policy of ten teams. Therefore, the determination of Structure for high school age groups will be tempered with the common sense and good judgment of the Structure Committee, filling the divisions from the top down and ensuring competitive play. Placement of a high school aged team in the Structure will be based on the number of teams playing in the given season, the team's previous NCSL record and standing, age group played in, consistency of rostered players between the team's current roster and the roster at the time of the team's last played NCSL season game, any received information about use of club passes, state/regional/national cup competition (other tournament play will not be considered), and R&D standings. Clubs are strongly encouraged to provide to NCSL written information concerning these factors to ensure proper placement in Structure.

Notwithstanding the above, teams that are accepted to play in a Region 1 league or the National League may reenter the NCSL the following season. Placement in structure for such teams will be based on the team's previous NCSL record and standing, consistency of rostered players between the team's current roster and the roster at the time of the team's last played NCSL season game, record in Region 1 or National League play and R&D standing.

Structure will strive to limit U19 divisions (or combined U18-19 divisions) to eight teams in the Spring, and all games are to be completed prior to the Friday before Memorial Day weekend.

Section VIII Schedules

Scheduling will be finalized in time to give the referee assignors 14 days' notice of the first weekend's games and to have sufficient time to distribute the schedule. Schedules will be posted on the NCSL website following the Fall and Spring preseason meetings. All necessary game cards, sit-out cards, etc. will be passed out at the end of these meetings.

Rainouts

Teams are to play games as scheduled unless the NCSL Administrator determines that a rainout is declared by the league. The league attempts to do this by 9:00 a.m. or two hours before the first game, whichever comes first.

Flex Scheduling

The league will honor timely submitted flex schedule requests. Flex scheduling can occur both preseason and during the season, subject to strict deadlines. The existence of flex scheduling does not change any of the general rules defining or otherwise limited those situations. A flex scheduling request must be submitted and approved by the official NCSL club representative of both affected clubs. It must clearly identify the game to be rescheduled and the specific date, time and location of the agreed to rescheduling. Efforts will be made to reduce gaps in schedules or stand-alone games. Those efforts can include moving a game from a nearby field. The flex schedule request will not be effective until approved by the league and both clubs are so notified. The existence of flex scheduling does not eliminate any other rules with regard to scheduling. Timeliness of Flex Schedule Request -- Clubs must meet the published deadlines for the Flex Schedule Requests.

Reserved league rain dates cannot be used for Flex Scheduling requests unless or until that restriction is removed by the League.

Check Fields Three Hours Before First Game

The ability to provide sufficient notice of rainouts and reschedules depends on the cooperation of the club representatives who must go out and check their fields at least three hours before the first game, so they can report field playability to the NCSL office.

If a field is deemed by a club or by its permitting authority to be unplayable, the club representative should report the condition to the league office **NO LATER THAN 9:00 A.M. OR TWO HOURS PRIOR TO THE FIRST GAME** if it is scheduled to begin before 9:00 A.M. With this information, the league can evaluate a cancellation of all games.

If a club's failure to provide the league with information on poor playing conditions causes the NCSL to be liable for referee fees, **THE CLUB WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT.** The league is required to give referees two hours' notice of cancellation.

If the rain begins or worsens after the playing day has begun, please attempt to let the league know the situation. In certain cases a school or park authority (permitting authority) makes the decision as to field playability, and clubs must understand how to work with those systems.

Home Team Must Report Field Closings

Regardless of who makes the determination of field playability, the home club has the responsibility to notify the league of field closings not later than 9:00 A.M. or two hours prior to game time for games

scheduled to begin before 9:00 A.M. The club representative should make the notification. For circumstances not involving a lapse of responsibility on the part of the club representative, the R&D Committee chairman has a right to waive this rule.

Schedule Conflict Exists

If a State Cup game is scheduled for the same day as an NCSL game, the Cup game takes precedence. The team is ultimately responsible for notifying the league office about a state cup conflict in order to get the league match rescheduled. The team must notify the league about the conflict, at least 24 hours prior to the league match or within 2 hours of advancing in state cup play if a state cup match is played less than 48 hours prior to the league match. If a team fails to notify the league office, in a manner specified, the league match will be forfeited and will not be rescheduled.

Rescheduling shall be granted for a conflict with a middle school or high school activity or an Olympic Development Program travel conflict only if the following conditions are met:

- The middle school or high school soccer activity is a school soccer sanctioned competition against another school at which referees are present and officiate.
- Three or more players on the club team are players on the middle school or high school team(s) involved with the conflicting game(s) and the remaining number of players on the current certified roster is 15 or fewer; e.g., a team with 19 players on the roster has three players with a High School conflict would not get their game rescheduled.
- The club notifies the Administrator at least 7 days in advance of the first NCSL game of the season of any conflict with a regularly scheduled middle school or high school game, or at least 24 hours in advance of the affected NCSL game in the case of a rescheduled middle school or high school game, play-off middle school or high school game or a middle school or high school tournament game unless such rescheduling or playoff scheduling is announced less than 24 hours in advance of the affected NCSL game, in which case notification shall be made as soon as possible.
- A conflict is deemed not to exist if the NCSL game is scheduled to begin five hours or more after the scheduled start of the middle school or high school game and the game site is within the boundaries of the NCSL service area. The opposing team is to be notified promptly by the NCSL Administrator upon application of a team to reschedule a game for any reason.
- A request for rescheduling due to claim of a middle school or high school soccer conflict must include the names of the affected players, and the middle school or high school, name and telephone number of the coach of the concerned school team.

Olympic Development Program and State Mini-camp Weekends: Prior to the season, any team that reasonably anticipates having two or more players participating in mandatory ODP state tryouts may request not to play NCSL games on either weekend. Teams seeking not to play on these weekends shall make a request on the 'NCSL Rescheduling Request Form' by the date set by the NCSL Administrator. Teams will be required to provide the name and date of birth of any players that will participate. If the NCSL Administrator determines that a team will have, or is likely to have, two or more players participating, and confirms that participation on that particular date is mandatory, the NCSL Administrator will approve the team's request.

State sponsored competition: A NCSL game may be rescheduled if it conflicts with a club team's participation in a state-sponsored competition such as the President's Cup.

NOTE: The league does NOT give byes to teams wishing to travel to tournaments during the league season. This includes NCSL rain dates. Neither will the league allow teams to rearrange games for tournament play during the league season. Teams wishing to travel must be prepared to take a forfeit of any NCSL game(s) scheduled to conflict with tournament games.

Referees Decide Unplayability

The referee declares the field unplayable. The game may not be played once the referee has made this declaration. In some cases, teams must also adhere to late decisions by a park authority or school board. This may cause inconvenience to the visiting team who has traveled to the site, but that cannot be helped in many cases because of weather worsening during the time the visiting team is en route to the game.

The fact that a field is declared unplayable because of dangerous weather conditions does not automatically affect a later scheduled game. At a referee's discretion, the field may be declared "temporarily unplayable" when dangerous weather conditions exist.

Lightning

If the referee believes the dangerous conditions may pass shortly, e.g., within 30 minutes, this brief waiting period should be observed. A specific waiting period must be declared at the time and a decision as to whether the game is to be continued or terminated must be made at the conclusion of said period. When a referee declares a field unplayable or temporarily unplayable due to dangerous weather conditions, all players, coaches, and spectators are to leave the vicinity of the field immediately. (See Appendix X)

Replay Whole Game

Games cancelled because of weather or darkness problems during the game, will be scheduled by the league to be replayed in their entirety.

When games are cancelled due to rain, the home team should have the courtesy to call the visitors and tell them. NCSL has had cases of teams driving long distances, only to find out fields were closed hours or days earlier. Please be considerate of fellow coaches and parents.

Forfeiture

Coaches may not arrange a cancellation of a game between teams. Should a team have to forfeit because it cannot play on a certain date, the club representative must contact the NCSL office. The office will notify the opposing coach, and the referee.

Coaches cannot arrange forfeits with other coaches. Teams forfeiting more than 15% of their games may be subject to a hearing before the R&D Committee, and penalties such as forfeiture of the entire season or placement in bad standing could affect club eligibility or cause denial of future league entry.

If there is a rainout, affecting a significant number of games, please check the NCSL website, call the HOTLINE or your division scorekeeper, do not tie up the office phone lines. Rainout information will be recorded on the NCSL HOTLINE, (703) 791-2656, on game days with significant weather problems. The NCSL scorekeepers will call all division scorekeepers, who will in turn notify their respective coaches by recording a message on their division mailbox.

Check the web site or call the hotline for weather related announcements

If all or most of the games on a particular Sunday are rained out and cancelled, the NCSL Administrator will designate one of the rain dates to be used for rescheduling. For a partial rainout, or any other conflict, the games will be rescheduled by the NCSL Administrator on the first available date. The calendar for the Fall and Spring seasons is posted on the NCSL website.

To use referees efficiently, NCSL will make every attempt not to schedule single games on weekends. Clubs will be required to host each other from time to time in order that games are paired. Games may be paired with those of another league, if they are assigned by the same referee assignor and if the league is

made aware of such games by the time NCSL scheduling begins.

NCSL attempts to make home and away contests equal in number, but field availability, referee availability and scheduling do not always make this possible.

Adherence to the above policies is MANDATORY. The complexity of the NCSL schedule requires that coaches plan their work and travel schedules around their league schedule, or be prepared to send the team to a game with an assistant coach or parent. Playing in another league will NOT be considered an excuse for missing or changing an NCSL game. NCSL considers itself your primary league. Playing in another league or coaching another team will not be considered in the use of rain dates or in rescheduling games.

Week Night Rescheduling

If it is determined that a game must be rescheduled on a week night as a result of lack of field availability or if one team already has games scheduled on all remaining Saturdays, the NCSL office will contact the home team club representative. This club representative will have 48 hours to work with both teams to find an acceptable weeknight and field to play the game. If an agreement cannot be reached, the game will be rescheduled by the NCSL Administrator on the first available date and field, as determined by the NCSL Administrator.

Section IX Rules of Play for NCSL Games

All league matches will be played in accordance with the current "Laws of the Game" (English Edition) approved by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) with modifications for youth games as well as United States Youth Soccer Official Rule Book for Small-sided games. All administrative procedures will be conducted pursuant to the approved guidelines listed in United States Soccer Federation (USSF) Bylaws, USSF Policy Manual and all NCSL rules and procedures listed in this manual.

NOTE: Both teams are responsible for informing the referee(s) of all NCSL modifications of FIFA laws of the game.

Showing Cards to Coaches

Referees must show yellow and red cards to coaches, assistant coaches, or team officials for infractions that might merit a yellow (caution) or red (ejection).

If a referee fails to show a red card to a coach, assistant coach, or other team official but dismisses an individual from the match, this individual is considered to have received the red card and must serve the appropriate suspension(s). Furthermore, the accumulated points associated with the dismissal will be assessed against the individual.

Number of Players to Start the Game	Minimum Number of Players
U13 – U19 Play 11 v 11	7
U11 and U12 Play 9 v 9	7
U9 and U10 Play 7 v 7	6

Game Ball Size

U9 - U12	Number four ball
U13 - U19	Number five ball

Length of Games and number of referees

U9 – U11	30-minute halves, 1 referee
U12	35-minute halves, 1 referee and 2 STARS
U13	35-minute halves, 1 referee and 2 STARS
U14	35-minute halves, 3 referees
U15 and U16	40-minute halves, 3 referees
U17 thru U19	45-minute halves, 3 referees

Checking Official State Roster and Player Passes

Each team must have a current Official State Roster, a game-day roster (blue game card information), and USYS Player Passes at every match. Electronic copies of these documents are not acceptable forms for game-day check in. Prior to the start of every match, the Center Referee, Assistant Referee or Emergency Step in Referee will be required to check player passes against each player. The USYS Player Passes and the Official State Roster must remain at the field until the successful completion of the match.

This requirement is not optional and the assigned Center Referee, Assistant Referee or Emergency Step in Referee must comply with this policy. Refusal of this requirement must be reported to the League's R&D Chairperson following the match.

Teams will be given a 15 minute grace period from the scheduled "kick off" time to produce the USYS Player Passes and the Official State Roster. The game should not be started while awaiting the roster and passes. After the 15 minute grace period, the match will be declared a forfeit and the score will be recorded as a 0-3 loss for the forfeiting team.

NOTE: For U9 and U10 matches, the NCSL allows USYS carded travel players to play on any team for which they are age-qualified within their club. For U11 through U19 matches, the NCSL allows up to 5 USYS carded travel players to play in matches for which they are age-qualified within their club. Players must have their USYS travel player pass at the match and their name must be added to the game-day roster on the blue game card. These club pass players will obviously not be listed on the Official State Roster for the competing team.

Substitution

Substitutions are unlimited with regard to the number of players and reentry. Substitutions may be made from MIDFIELD with the CONSENT OF THE REFEREE at any stoppage of play. Players leaving the game should come off the field prior to new players entering the field. Misapplication of this substitution rule shall not be subject to protest.

Please note that while a penalty kick is a stoppage of play and teams may substitute, only players that were on the field at the time of the infraction may take the kick.

Club Pass

NCSL prides itself on providing a game-day experience that is superior in competitiveness to any other area league. It is the policy of NCSL that players rostered to clubs playing within the league should be given the opportunity to play at a level of competitiveness that is appropriate for the player at the time of each game. Accordingly, NCSL has adopted a club pass policy that recognizes that flexibility in rostering should be allowed for this purpose. The policy is designed to enhance competition and development and not to undermine it. It is contrary to the spirit of this policy for clubs to place superior players in games against inferior competition solely for the purpose of collecting results.

General Requirements

At all levels of play, the club pass policy includes these restrictions:

- Players may play in only one NCSL game per day, except in the rare instance in which the team to which the player is officially rostered is scheduled to play multiple games, in which case, they may play in as many games as that team is scheduled to play.
- Players may play on any team within their club for which they would have otherwise been age and gender qualified to be officially rostered.
- All club pass players must be registered to a US Youth Soccer travel team within the club for which they intend to play.
- All participating players must be noted on the game-day roster, with club pass players appropriately noted.
- A team may never have more players on its game-day roster than are allowed at the age group (U9-10 – 12 players; U11-12 – 16 players; U13-19 – 18 players).
- All other roster restrictions apply (for example, boys may not play in the girls division, but girls may play in the open division).
- Players who earn disciplinary sit-outs (for a red card, accumulated points, or R&D action) may not use a club pass until the sit-outs are completed with the team to which they are officially rostered and as to games they were otherwise eligible to play.
- Players who earn disciplinary sit-outs (for a red card, accumulated points, or R&D action), but who are not officially rostered to an NCSL team must be listed on the roster and serve their sit-out in the next game played by the team with which they finally earned the sit-out.
- Sit-out games count as a game, so a player serving a sit-out on a day may not play in another NCSL game on that same day, even on a club pass, except in the rare case where a single team has two games scheduled on the same day.

Club Pass Examples

1. **Acceptable.** The coach of the U9 ABC Red decides in consultation with her opposing coach that the game would be more competitive if the U9 ABC Blue played on a club pass in place of the Red team. The manager presents the Red team roster and the 12 Blue team player passes and records those Blue team names on the blue game card. Teams have an unlimited number of club passes at U9 and U10.

2. **Unacceptable.** The U14 ABC Red has a game on Sunday, and #22 Tyler Smith (a Red team player who played only 2 minutes on a club pass in the White team game earlier that day) shows up for the game. The player appears on the roster and plays in the Red team game. A player may play for only one NCSL team per day.

3. **Acceptable.** #39 Andrew Smith, an 8-year-old playing up on the U10 ABC Gold team, has a conflict with his team's game time. His coach asks the U9 ABC Blue if Andrew can play on a club pass. Players may play on any team within their club for which they would have otherwise been age qualified to be officially rostered.

4. **Unacceptable.** #21 Emily Smith, rostered to the U12 ABC White team, is clearly the best goalkeeper in the league. Heading into the last game of the season, her team has already clinched a first-place finish in division 1, while the club's U12 ABC Green team believes it needs a win to remain in Division 5 next season. Though not technically a rule violation, it is contrary to the spirit of this policy for clubs to place superior players in games against inferior competition solely for the purpose of collecting results.

5. **Unacceptable.** #10 Gabriel Paez, rostered to the U14 ABC Red team, club passes on Sunday morning for the club's White team. He earns a red card during the match and must serve a sit out. His Red team manager submits a sit out card for his afternoon game later that same day. A player must serve sit outs in games in which he was eligible to play, and because a player may only play in one NCSL game per day and had already played in the morning on a club pass, this player was ineligible for the afternoon match.

6. **Mixed.** Twin 15-year old siblings John and Mary Doe both play for ABC club's open division team. The club's girls division team in that age group has suffered injuries and needs players. Mary may play in the girls division on a club pass, but John may not. Boys may not use a club pass to play on a team in the girls division team, but girls may play in the open division.

Club Passes for U9-U10 Games

All U9 and U10 teams may use an unlimited number of club pass players per game.

Club pass players must present their US Youth Soccer travel player pass to their opponent's team official, either the Team Manager, Coach or Assistant Coach. The club pass player's name must be added to the **team's game day roster that is shown on the Official Blue Game card**. An asterisk (*) must be placed next to the club pass player's name on the Official Blue Game card.

Club Passes for U11-19 Games

Teams may use up to five (5) club pass players per game in any game from U11 to U19.

Club pass players must present their US Youth Soccer travel player pass, a copy of the roster of the team they are rostered to as a primary player, and the NCSL Club Pass Section on the Blue Game Card completed with all pertinent information on each club pass player to their opponent's team official, either the Team Manager, Coach or Assistant Coach. The club pass player's name must be added to the team's game day roster that is shown on the Official Blue Game card. An asterisk (*) must be placed next to the club pass player's name on the Official Blue Game card. These documents become part of the pre-game check-in.

If a non-NCSL club pass player is serving a sit out during a game, that player shall be listed on the Official Blue Game card, so the referee and League will have a record of the sit out.

U9-10 Player Development Initiative Modifications

Build-Out Lines

The Build-Out Line is a line extending from touchline to touchline halfway between the penalty area and the center line. When the defending goalkeeper has the ball in hand or the defending team has been awarded a goal kick, the attacking team shall retreat behind the Build-Out Line until the ball is put back in play. Where a physical line is not present, the referee may mark the line with appropriate soft cones, pennies, or other markings placed off the field. The defending team is not required to wait until the attacking team retreats behind the Build-Out Line; indeed, some clubs will instruct their teams not to wait, choosing instead to force their players to play out of pressure.

An attacking player shall not be deemed to be in an offside position if such player has not crossed the Build-Out Line at the time the ball is played.

No Punting/Dropkicks

If the goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense; if the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick will be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the offense occurred

U9-11 Heading Ban Modification

Whenever the ball strikes a player in the head, play is stopped. The proper restart depends upon whether the player deliberately played the ball with his or her head. If deliberate, the proper restart is an indirect free kick to the opposing team. If this occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If the play by the head is deemed in advertent, then the proper restart is a dropped ball.

Noisemakers

Use of horns, wooden clappers, sirens, power megaphones and other noisemakers is banned at NCSL games. Violation of this rule may result in forfeiture.

Fields

Any field accepted by the league is, by definition, acceptable for league play. Field and goal size will not be a matter of protest. Fields may be deemed unsafe by the referee.

Team Side

Both teams in all age groups are required to take the same side of the field. The Home team's coach is responsible for choosing the side of the field the teams will occupy.

Members of each team will remain on opposite sides of the centerline. Coaches shall not stray so far from the center line that they cross the top of the penalty area. Other team officials and players are to remain between the center line and the 18 yard line. All are to be at least 3 yards behind the touchline.

Coach Responsibilities

During the match, each coach is responsible for the behavior of his team and any adults on his sideline.

Spectator Area

With the exception of a maximum of four team officials, who shall be issued official NCSL sideline passes which will be checked before the game by the Referees, all spectators are to be in the spectator area. The spectator area is on the other sideline, not the team side. Sometimes it is marked. Nonetheless, all spectators must remain on that sideline, between the penalty areas and at least three yards behind the touchline. Spectators can be on either side of the midfield and can mix amongst themselves. They cannot be behind the goals, or inside the penalty areas. Unless they have one of the four sideline passes, they cannot be on the team side.

NOTE: Any player, coach, or spectator who encourages a team or individual members of a team to intentionally injure or physically abuse a member of another team is guilty of a serious breach of the NCSL Code of Conduct. Referees have been instructed to take immediate action which may include carding of coaches or players for foul or abusive language and ordering spectators away from the vicinity of the field.

Section X Game Procedures

Game Checklist - Home Team

Early in week:

- Checks fields
- Calls opponents with directions and uniform color

On game day:

- Rechecks fields
- Fills out blue game card (blank copies are distributed by the league to the clubs and the clubs to the teams; they can also be downloaded from the NCSL website)
- Has opponent fill out and sign game card
- Has stamped roster and player passes
- TSL signs blue game card
- Checks players for proper equipment (Changes shirts if color conflict)
- Has choice of side of field
- Monitors sideline behavior

- Distributes official NCSL Sideline Passes to no more than four adults who may be located on the teams' side of the field with the team
- TSL introduces him/herself to referees

Game Checklist - Visiting Team

Early in week:

- Gets and distributes field directions from home coach
- Has choice of uniform color and notifies home coach

On game day:

- Fills out and signs game card prepared by home coach
- Has stamped roster and player passes and checks opponent's passes
- Checks players for proper equipment
- TSL signs blue game card
- Takes side of field designated by home coach
- Monitors sideline behavior
- Distributes official NCSL Sideline Passes to no more than four adults who may be located on the teams' side of the field with the team
- TSL introduces him/herself to referees

Winning Team

- Calls in score by 8pm (Both teams call if the game is tied or incomplete)
- Reports cards and significant game incidents
- Reports if referees or assistant referees were missing

Before Game Day

The home team is to check the condition of its field and the height of the grass. Get the field mowed if necessary. If the referee refuses to let the game play because the grass is too tall, the referee may depart, certain of being paid, and the home club's team or teams may forfeit.

Even when the determination of whether or not a particular field is playable is the responsibility of a park authority or military installation, etc., if the field is not playable the home team has the responsibility to get its club rep to notify the league office no later than 9:00 a.m. or two hours prior to game time if the game is scheduled to begin earlier than 11 a.m. For circumstances not involving a lapse of responsibility on the part of the club rep, the chairman of the R&D Committee has the right to waive this rule.

The home team should contact the visiting team at least three days prior to game day to confirm the day, date, time and place of the match as a courtesy. Give good directions to the field. Check on possible uniform color conflict. Home team changes in case of an unresolved conflict. Accurate maps to long distance fields would be a help to visitors.

On Game Day

- The home team will check the field and make sure it is properly lined and that nets and corner poles are in place.
- If nets and lines are not in place when the referee is ready to begin the game, the home team may forfeit.
- Be sure each coach and manager knows where the nets, poles, and lining equipment are kept for your club.
- If the city, county, or park authority lines your fields, be sure they do it properly and often enough, or purchase equipment to have on hand in an emergency.
- Be sure the city, county, or park authority has your club's schedule so they can plan ahead to have fields ready.
- Every sideline will have, at a minimum, spectator lines painted on the ground: minimum three

yards back from the touchline, where space permits, beginning 18 yards in front of each end line. As a minimum, lines will be painted on the ground. Ropes, cones, etc., will also be acceptable. All spectators must stay behind this line and are not allowed beyond it into the penalty box area or along the end line. Spectator lines will be in the Spectator Area on the side of the field opposite the teams.

Prior to the start of the game, the home team is to provide the referee with the blue game card. The home team should have its section of the report filled in prior to arriving at the field. Visiting teams should arrive at the field at least 15-30 minutes prior to game time and fill in their section.

- Fill in the date, time, and place and field accurately.
- Fill in NCSL Team Numbers.
- Make sure the complete game number is filled in. This is the computer number just before the home team's computer number on the schedule.
- Fill in the age group and division.
- Include all players' numbers, and make sure jersey numbers are identical to numbers on listed on the game card.
- Indicate which player or players are goalkeepers.
- Indicate if any person is sitting out the game for disciplinary reasons in the proper section of the game report, and complete the separate sit-out certification report as set forth in Section XII, Sit-out Procedures.
- Indicate whether any players are club pass players with an asterisk (*), and if so, complete the club pass form.
- If anyone other than the coach of record is coaching on a particular game date, so indicate on the game card for the purpose of the assessment of disciplinary points.
- Be sure each team has the coach or manager sign.
- Be sure each team's TSL signs the game card and introduces him/herself to the referee.

NOTE: If persons sitting out games for disciplinary reasons are not identified on the report, the sit-out does not count. Coaches sitting out should not attend, but if they do attend they must be visibly apart from the match (no closer than 100 yards from the field) and have no part in the administration of the team on the day of the match. Review the sit-out procedures in Section XII. Sit-out of another game will be required when the R&D chairman determines that a sit-out did not occur or was not recorded on the game card. Disciplinary sit-outs may also be assessed, and the game may be declared a forfeit. Assurances are not satisfactory. It is the coach's responsibility to record the sit-out, not the responsibility of the referee.

All team officials (maximum of four) must have an NCSL Sideline Pass to remain on the teams' side of the field. All spectators must view the game from the Spectator Area opposite the teams' side. Each coach is responsible for checking player passes against the game report prior to the game. Passes should be checked for every game.

Prior to the game, both coaches should meet with the referee(s) to go over the length of halves and NCSL modification of FIFA rules.

Games are to begin on schedule. Have your field ready for the first game of the day to begin on time. Do not expect long warm-ups between games. Teams not having the minimum number of players ready to play within 15 minutes of the scheduled kickoff time forfeit. If the minimum number of players arrives within the 15 minute grace period, the game must begin as soon as the minimum are present. Good judgment and sportsmanship are encouraged if teams are traveling long distances to games or if games are on weekday evenings when traffic is bad.

Make sure that all the team's jerseys are numbered and there are no duplicate numbers. Jersey numbers should coincide with the player's numbers as listed on the game report. Goalkeepers need not have numbers. Players without numbers may not participate in the game. Players must wear the same socks of a solid color, stripes, etc. Players may not wear one red and one blue sock, for example. The mandatory equipment for all players includes jerseys, shorts, shoes (determined by the referee to be safe), and shin guards (mandated by FIFA rules).

Players must have their socks pulled up over the top of their shin guards and their shirts tucked into their shorts at the start of each half. Compression shorts are allowed if they are the same color as the wearer's shorts and do not extend farther than the top of the knee. Players will not be allowed to play if not in accordance with these equipment rules.

If a game is stopped because one coach pulls his team from the field, this case will go the R&D Committee who will investigate the circumstances and rule on whether a replay will occur, a forfeit will be awarded, or other sanctions assessed. In no case will a team gain an advantage by a replay if that team has left the field during a game.

When the Referee is Missing

The league encourages teams to play their matches whenever possible. If the referee does not arrive prior to the scheduled game time, the game may be played with a volunteer referee whether certified or not. If both coaches agree to use a volunteer referee, no protest of the outcome of the match will be allowed based on the qualification (or lack thereof) of the volunteer. Agreement **must** be documented by both coaches initialing the blue game card next to the volunteer referee's name prior to the start of the game.

If both coaches do not agree on use of a volunteer referee, both teams should immediately leave the field and not attempt a scrimmage or inter-team training session.

If the assigned referee arrives after the game has started, the volunteer referee may turn over responsibility to the late-arriving referee at a stoppage of play after establishing with him the time remaining, score, and any cautions/ejections issued. The game will continue, not be restarted.

An immediate family member of a player is not permitted to serve as an assigned or volunteer referee or assistant referee for that player's game without prior approval by both coaches. Immediate family member is defined as parent, grandparent, guardian, sibling, aunt, uncle, or any other family relative who may have a vested interest in the outcome of the match. The team providing the family member **must** ensure that their opponent is informed of the family relationship. The approval **must** be documented by both coaches initialing the blue game card prior to the start of the game.

Exceptions: Documented approval by coaches is not required when:

1. An assistant referee serves in a U12 and U13 match as a Special Team Assistant Referee (STAR). See Appendix XI for details of the STAR program.
2. A referee uses a volunteer only to signal when the ball has left the field. This role is referred to as a club linesman by USSF.

Failure to follow the documentation procedures in this section **may** result in a forfeit, non-game or replay of the match.

Report the absence of a referee to your club representative and division scorekeeper.

Rescheduled Games

The NCSL Administrator will reschedule all NCSL games canceled or not played. The NCSL Administrator will attempt to reschedule games on the next available game day according to field and

referee availability. Special scheduling requests submitted prior to the start of the season will be taken into consideration and honored if at all possible. NCSL will honor special requests involving religious holidays if they were listed on the special scheduling request forms. Once a make-up game has been assigned by the NCSL Administrator and the referees and teams have been notified, this game is final and will not be changed, except as specified under the flex schedule program.

Calling in the Score

The winning team is to report the score on the day of the match before 8:00 p.m. to the division scorekeeper. In case of a tie, cancellation at the field, or uncompleted game, both teams must call. Call the score in as early as possible. Please do not wait to call so that you can obtain the results of the day's matches. Teams and/or scorekeepers cannot declare a forfeit. They report the score and what occurred and the league determines whether there should be a forfeit. **The Age Group Scorekeepers must turn in their complete scores and referee coverage for each match to their scorekeeper NO LATER THAN 9:00 P.M.**

The score for forfeiture will be recorded as 3-0 to reflect the gravity of the offense and to conform to international rules. Repeated forfeiture may be a matter for investigation by the R&D Committee and possible forfeiture of the entire season, loss of cup play eligibility and a team's future entry into NCSL. Clubs who enter teams who want NCSL status and do not play at least 85% of their games may also be subject to disciplinary action.

NOTE: Winning team calls in the score before 8 p.m., but in case of a tie or incomplete game, both teams call their scorekeeper.

Since U9 and U10 scores and standings are not kept, it is not necessary to call in scores for these age groups. For the Fall U11 season, when score data is used to determine division standings for the Spring U11 season, scores will be reported to the division scorekeeper.

The Complete NCSL Guide to Rain - 2 Hours Before First Game But Not After 9:00 am

- Club representative ascertains field conditions and contacts NCSL Administrator at (703) 385-1608.
- NCSL Administrator makes rain-out decisions.
- NCSL Administrator notifies referee assignors.
- Club representative notifies all coaches with home games of any changes and/or cancellations.
- Home team notifies visiting team that fields are closed, and/or changes are necessary.
- If league-wide rain-out, rain dates are used; if not, NCSL Administration reschedules all games on first available date.

NOTE: All rescheduling will be done by NCSL Administrator. Please leave the NCSL lines open for gathering field information and notifying club representatives. Check the NCSL website or CALL THE HOTLINE FOR WEATHER RELATED ANNOUNCEMENTS (703) 791-2656.

Section XI Division Standings

A team's standing in its division will be determined by the number of points it receives based on its win/loss record during the season. Points will be awarded as follows: 3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for a loss.

Tiebreakers

In the case of point ties at the end of the regularly scheduled season, final division standings for any teams

involved will be determined on the basis of the following tiebreaker sequence:

- Head-to-head result between the two teams or among the three, four, or five teams involved. Using a three-way tie as an example: A beat B; B tied C; C beat A. A is 1-1-0=3 points. B is 0-1-1=1 point. C is 1-0-1=4 points. C is the winner with four tiebreaker points, A would finish 2nd, and B would finish in 3rd place. If two teams are still tied after using this head-to-head tiebreaker, restart with the head-to-head results between the two teams that are tied.
- Most wins during the season.
- Fewest goals allowed during the season.
- Fewest disciplinary points awarded during the season.
- Most goals scored during the season.
- Coin toss by NCSL president.

NOTE: The NCSL structure tries to have all divisions with ten teams. Depending on the number of teams that apply and last minute drops, some divisions may have an odd number of teams, e.g. nine teams. As a result of this situation, one team in the division has been scheduled a tenth game so that all other teams in the division can be scheduled nine games. This scheduling ensures equitable competition in these divisions with odd numbers of teams. The team, which plays the tenth game, will not receive credit for this tenth game; however, the opponent team will receive credit since it is their ninth game. The tenth game will be chosen prior to the start of the season; however, the division will not be informed of which game is the tenth game. Past experience has shown that if a team knows it is playing the tenth game and that the outcome will not matter for their team, the team may choose to forfeit or not play to win. Since this game does matter for the opponent team, the game should be played and the outcome decided on the field. At the end of the season, the scores and standings posted on the website will reflect that this particular game was the tenth game for one team and the score will not count for this team.

Trophies

For the Fall season, trophies may be awarded to first and second place finishers in all divisions except U9, U10, and U11. For the Spring season, trophies may be awarded to all first and second place finishers except U9 and U10. No trophies will be awarded until the first season of results oriented play.

Too Many Forfeits, No Trophies

Teams must play a minimum of 85% of their games to be considered for trophies for future league play. Teams consistently forfeiting will be subject to disciplinary action by the R&D Committee. Clubs knowingly entering teams that forfeit more than 15% of their games are also subject to disciplinary action by the R&D Committee. For example, a club's teams might be denied entry to the NCSL.

Trophy Distribution

In the Fall, trophies will be shipped directly to the winning teams in late November. No trophies will be available before that date. Plan your team parties and presentations around that date. In the Spring, trophies will be shipped directly to the winning teams in late June.

Section XII Rules and Discipline Committee

Organization, Responsibility and Procedures

Interpreting and enforcing NCSL rules and disciplining behavior contrary to the NCSL Code of conduct will be the responsibility of a R&D committee. The chairman of the committee will be appointed by the President. The chairman will appoint members from Maryland, D.C., and Virginia to serve on the committee.

Meetings

During each season the R&D Committee will meet as needed. Any three committee members, including the chairman, will constitute a quorum, although the chairman will vote only in the event of a tie. A committee member may not participate in any hearing involving his/her own club or an age/division in which they have an involvement.

Duties

The R&D Committee is responsible for the following:

- Investigating and conducting hearings, as appropriate, to determine, assess, and enforce penalties when violations of NCSL rules or the NCSL Code of Conduct may have occurred. The R&D Committee has jurisdiction over rostered players and all team officials (including trainers) whether listed on the roster or not, and affiliates.
- Resolving protests based on alleged misapplication of FIFA Laws of the Game and appeals concerning referee actions or alleged violation of NCSL rules which may be appealed.
- Maintaining records of all cautions, ejections and the associated point count assessed against players and team officials.
- Reviewing any game terminated prior to its conclusion and providing the league with an official determination of the outcome of the game.
- Periodically reviewing rules and discipline policies and procedures, including the penalties for misconduct, and recommending changes to the officers as deemed necessary.

Referee Assault and Abuse

When a player, coach, manager, club official, or affiliate is alleged to have assaulted or abused a referee or an assistant referee, as those terms are defined in United States Soccer Federation Policy 531-9, the appropriate state association has primary jurisdiction. The R&D Chairman, having information about an alleged assault, will immediately notify the proper state association authorities and give them all information NCSL has compiled.

Any player, coach, other team official, or affiliate alleged to have assaulted a referee or assistant referee is automatically suspended from all NCSL games pending resolution by the state association. Rules for serving sit-outs apply to individuals on suspension pending resolution of the allegation.

Protests and Appeals Definitions

Game Protests: Alleged misapplication of FIFA Laws of the Game by the referee which may have affected the outcome of the game may be protested (A single incident in a 7-0 game will generally not be considered to have affected the outcome of the game.) Incidents resulting from judgment calls may not be protested.

Other protests: Referee actions other than judgment calls and alleged violation of NCSL rules and procedures, which may have affected the outcome of the game, may be protested. For example, playing of an ineligible player or coach serving a sit-out coaching a team.

Per USSF memo dated November 14, 2003, if an ejection of a player is being appealed, the sit-out requirement will **not** be held in abeyance pending R&D action. If a R&D decision cannot be reached prior to the next NCSL match, the suspension must be served.

If a sit-out requirement for accumulated points for a player is being appealed, the sit-out requirement is automatically held in abeyance pending R&D action.

If an ejection or other sit-out requirement for a coach is being appealed, the sit-out requirement is automatically held in abeyance pending R&D action.

Filing Protests and Appeals

Protests must be submitted in writing to the R&D Chairman within two days of the match protested. Copies of the protest must be sent to the opposing coach and both club representatives. Protests must include:

- the date, time, place and game number of the match
- the age group/division, and both NCSL team numbers
- the nature of the protest
- statements from eyewitnesses (as appropriate)
- the remedy requested
- protest fee

Protests may be e-mailed directly to the R&D Chairman at rdchairman@ncsl-soccer.com, and mailed to NCSL, P.O. Box 11458, Alexandria, VA 22312. The mailed submission must be postmarked; a postal meter stamp is not acceptable. The protest fee must accompany the protest mailed to the NCSL office.

The fee for a protest is \$200. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned. If the protest is denied, the fee will be deposited to the general fund of the league. A team is subject to suspension if its check is not accepted for payment.

R&D Action on Protests and Appeals

The R&D chairman will review protests and appeals for determination of proper filing and the nature of the matter being protested. If he determines that a protest is validly submitted, he will initiate action to resolve the issue. This may be accomplished by consulting other committee members by phone or personally or by holding a hearing. The chairman will be the judge of which method of resolution will be used.

It is the policy of the R&D Committee not to review videotapes of any game. All decisions of the R&D Committee will be rendered in writing. Decisions will be sent to the opposing coach and both club representatives.

Discipline

The existence of an NCSL committee with authority to discipline does not relieve each club of its responsibility to insure that players under its sponsorship will play and learn in a safe and supportive environment. The League expects clubs to take prompt, effective action when it detects problems. The R&D Committee will defer to club action, provided it is satisfied the action is appropriate and responsive. The R&D chairman will receive reports of problems (including phone calls and written communications from referees, coaches, the league administrator, game reports, etc.) He will review the record of offenses set out therein, and if necessary, communicate with referees and other witnesses to obtain any information they may possess. If the chairman deems disciplinary action is appropriate, he will advise appropriate club representatives by phone or in writing of the offense(s) and the action planned by the Committee.

Failure of an individual to observe the sit-out procedures described below will be reviewed by the committee and may result in additional sanctions, including forfeits for using suspended personnel.

Any team (players, coaches, or team officials) which shows continued disregard for the NCSL Code of Conduct or the league's rules and procedures will be subject to sanctions determined by the R&D Committee. A team may be instructed to appear before the committee to determine the circumstances surrounding the incidents in question, the corrective measures the team proposes to take, and whether penalties against the team are in the best interest of NCSL.

The R&D Committee may fine and/or suspend teams for significant misconduct. The committee will decide when a team fits into the category of significant misconduct. The duration of the suspension will be based on the severity of the offense; games missed because of the suspension will be recorded as forfeits in favor of the scheduled opponent. A fine will not be more than \$800.00. The committee will decide the amount of the fine depending upon the severity of the misbehavior of a team. If a team disbands or does not pay for any reason, the club will be responsible for the fine before the following season.

The committee will review the circumstances surrounding all games terminated for reasons other than bad weather, conducting a hearing if necessary. The committee will determine the outcome of the game, including requiring a replay if appropriate, and if additional sanctions to either or both teams are warranted. In no event will a team gain an advantage if the committee determines it to be responsible for termination of the match.

Appeal of R&D Decisions

Decisions of the R&D Committee may be appealed. The appeal cannot be based solely on the fact that the appellant is unhappy with the R&D decision and is seeking a retry of the case. The appeal must be based on any errors in process, procedure, or precedent that the team believes the R&D Committee made in reaching its decision.

The appealing party, within seven days of receiving written notice of the R&D decision, must send a written appeal via e-mail to the NCSL President and by mail to the NCSL President, c/o NCSL Office, P.O. Box 11458, Alexandria, VA 22312. The appeal must cite the errors made by the R&D Committee in reaching its decision, the remedy requested, and include the appeal fee. Written statements to be used in the appeal must be in the hands of the chairman 48 hours in advance of the hearing. A separate check for each appeal must be submitted regardless of fees previously submitted. The fee for an appeal of an R&D decision is \$500.

The Appeals Committee will consist of the president of NCSL or an officer designated by the president of NCSL who will preside, and four club representatives. A quorum is three and may include the chairman who may vote if there is a tie.

The NCSL President, or the designated officer, will review the appeal to determine if it was properly filed and the nature of the matter being appealed. If he determines that an appeal is validly submitted, he will initiate action to resolve the issue. This may be accomplished by consulting other appeals committee members by phone, holding a meeting of the appeals committee, or by holding a hearing. The President, or the designated officer, will be the judge of which method of resolution will be used.

If a hearing is deemed appropriate, the Appeals Committee will meet within fourteen days of receipt of an appeal unless otherwise ordered for good cause. The committee will hear the appealing party and the R&D Committee.

If the appeal is upheld, the fee will be returned; if the appeal is denied, the fee will be deposited to the general fund of the league.

NOTE: Decisions of the Appeals Committee are final within NCSL. The next avenue of appeal is to the state association.

NCSL Disciplinary Point System

The NCSL disciplinary point system is designed to impose **additional** sanctions on players, coaches, and team officials chronically receiving cautions and ejections in NCSL games.

Point values are assigned to cautions and ejections as follows:

- A player who receives one yellow card in a game is assessed 5 points. A player who receives two yellow cards in one game is assessed 10 points; 5 for each yellow even though he is shown a red card after receiving the second yellow. A player who receives a red card for a foul punishable by ejection (violent conduct, foul or abusive language, etc.) is assessed 10 points. If a player who has a yellow card is later ejected for a foul punishable by ejection, he is assessed 15 points; 5 for the yellow and 10 for the ejection.
- Coaches and other team officials. To emphasize the importance of the coach and other team officials leading by example, coaches and other team officials are assessed a coaches' penalty. The point system applied to players above apply to coaches except that coaches are assessed a 5-point penalty for the first card they receive in each game. Thus, one caution totals 10 points; 5 for the caution and 5 for the penalty. A caution followed by an ejection (not a second yellow) totals 20 points.
- In addition to the points for red and yellow cards issued during a game, the R&D Committee will assess points for suspensions and fines to a team as a result of any R&D decision as follows:
 - a) Each disciplinary suspension assessed against a player will count as 10 points.
 - b) Each disciplinary suspension assessed against a coach will count as 15 points.
 - c) Each disciplinary suspension assessed against an affiliate will count as 10 points (the disciplinary suspension of all affiliates from a match will count as 100 points).
 - d) Each \$100 or fraction thereof of assessed penalty against a team will count as 5 points.

NOTE: All the above points assessed by the R&D committee are assessed against the team not the individual player or coach.

Points assessed to coaches or trainers who are officials of more than one team apply only to the team against which the points were assessed. Similarly sit-out requirements apply to the team against which the points were earned.

A player, coach or other team official, who receives cautions and/or ejections totaling 20 points a season (fall or spring), must serve a one-game disciplinary suspension at the team's next NCSL game. A one-game disciplinary suspension must also be served for every 10 points received thereafter. Rules for serving suspensions due to ejections also apply to disciplinary suspensions due to accumulated points.

Cards issued during NCSL games (red and yellow) and disciplinary sanctions assessed by NCSL against a player belong to such player. The disciplinary points belong to the team for which the player was playing where the misconduct occurred. Sit-outs and suspensions must be served by that player with the NCSL team he is rostered with even though some if not all of the cards were earned and discipline imposed while the player played for another NCSL under the club pass rules. If such player is rostered with another league, the player may be banned from further participation within NCSL, and the NCSL team upon which he played may be sanctioned. Clubs are encouraged to assist NCSL in sanctioning players who commit violations within NCSL but are rostered within the club on a roster of a team from another league.

REMINDER!

A player who earns a sit out for any reason may not play on a club pass until all sit outs are completed with the team to which he is officially rostered and for games in which he is eligible to play. A player who plays on a club pass in a morning game cannot serve his sit out that same afternoon because a player may only play in one NCSL game per day.

Sit-out games count as a game, so a player serving a sit-out on a day may not play in another NCSL game on that same day, even on a club pass, except in the rare case where a single team has two games scheduled on the same day.

While points do not carry over from one season to the next, the committee will maintain records of player and team official point counts from prior seasons and will take this into account during its deliberations.

It is the team's responsibility to track its own point totals. The Committee will not notify teams that an individual owes a disciplinary suspension for cumulative points, but it will impose penalties if the sit-outs are not served in accordance with NCSL rules and procedures.

Sit-Out Procedures

After being ejected from a match, a coach or team official must leave the field area immediately and may not return to the field until 30 minutes after the game is completed. The field area is defined as the field plus 100 yards from it. During this period, a coach or team official must not be involved in any way with administration or communication with the team at the game site, either directly, or indirectly. The NCSL R&D Committee has adopted the VYSA Policy on Misconduct by Coaches as guidance in reviewing incidents of failure to comply with this no return policy. (See Appendix VI)

After being ejected from a match, a player at the referee's discretion may remain at the field provided the player is not disruptive and does not engage in further misconduct. If the referee insists, the player must leave the field area immediately and may not return to the field until after the game is completed. Players should not be sent 100 yards from the field area without appropriate adult supervision. Therefore, the team manager or TSL is responsible to ensure that adult supervision is provided and the player complies with this requirement.

The penalty for ejection from an NCSL game is an automatic one-game suspension, i.e., a sit-out. A player, coach, or other team official may be ejected during or after a game; an ejection after a game carries the same sanction as an ejection during a game. The R&D Committee also has authority to impose suspensions; these sit-out procedures apply to R&D imposed sit-outs. Multi-game suspensions must be served consecutively.

Cautions and ejections assessed in terminated games (for bad weather or for other reasons) count as if the game had been completed.

If a guest coach is not a rostered team official of the team and receives a red card in the game, they must serve **and document** the mandatory red card sit-out with the team they are officially rostered to. Any points earned as a guest coach will track with them to their primary team. If the person serving as the guest coach is not officially rostered to any team, they must serve **and document** the mandatory red card sit-out with the team where they earned the red card.

Sit-outs must be served consecutively in the next NCSL game(s) the team plays (except if the sit-out requirement is being appealed). Games cancelled by darkness or weather, won or lost by forfeit do not count as the "next NCSL game the team plays." Sit-outs being served in a game terminated by darkness or weather will not count and sit-outs being served in a game terminated by actions on the field that are not darkness or weather-related will be reviewed by the R&D Committee to determine whether or not the sit-out will count.

A player, coach or team official ejected in the last game of the season or owing a cumulative-point sit-out as a result of the last game must serve the sit-out in the next game the individual is eligible to play in.

A player sitting out a game may attend the game, but must not be in uniform and must not be on the team sideline, and must not assist in any function related to the game. For a team with more than 18 players on the roster, a player serving a sit-out may attend the game, but must not be in uniform and must not be on the team sideline, and must not assist in any function related to the game. However, the team may still

have 18 players on the game day roster.

Sit-out games count as a game, so a player serving a sit-out on a day may not play in another NCSL game on that same day, even on a club pass, except in the rare case where a single team has two games scheduled on the same day.

A coach or team official serving a sit-out is encouraged not to attend the game at all. If a coach or team official does attend, however, he must not be closer to the playing field than 100 yards beginning 30 minutes before game time, **and must remain not closer to the playing field than 100 yards until 30 minutes after the game is over. This period of time is defined as “the sit-out period.” During this “sit-out period” a coach or team official must not be involved in any way with administration of the team at the game site, either directly, or indirectly. Use of walkie-talkies, cell phones, or any other method of communication by the coach to communicate with the team is strictly forbidden.** The fact that a game can be seen from a public street or sidewalk, which may be closer than 100 yards does not relieve the coach or team official from complying with the 100-yard rule.

An official of the team with a player or coach/team official serving a sit-out is responsible for documenting the sit-out has occurred. For both players and coaches/team officials, a sit-out form should be completed and signed by an official of the opposing team. The form should be shown to the referee and the referee should be asked to note the sit-out on the blue match card as well as in the on-line report. Sit out forms are distributed by the league to the clubs, and the clubs to the teams. They can also be downloaded from the NCSL website. All sit out cards for team officials and players will serve as the primary documentation. The completed card should be sent to the league. The preferred method for doing so is to scan the card and email it to R&D. If regular mail is used, the team should make sure to retain a copy of the completed sit out form for their records. R&D’s email address is rdchairman@ncsl-soccer.com.

It is the team's responsibility to monitor cards received, sit-out requirements, and sit-outs served.

The team should regularly check their team page on the NCSL website to ensure that entries are accurate. Any perceived inaccuracies should be immediately reported through their club representative to R&D for resolution.

NOTE: Sit-outs earned but not served in one season carryover and must be served in the next season the individual participates in the NCSL. Players or team officials who change team affiliation between seasons still owe sit-outs regardless of any new team they join.

Rules and Discipline Penalties

The R&D Committee may impose penalties including but not limited to additional sit-outs, forfeitures, probation, suspension, or expulsion.

For teams with serious discipline problems as determined by the R&D Committee, a fine up to \$800 may be imposed.

In exceptional circumstances, the R&D chairman may provide the appropriate state association - VYSA or MSYSA - information concerning sanctions and suspensions it has levied. The state association may take these facts into account when approving travel applications, approving applications to host tournaments or festivals, approving application to host foreign teams, choosing representatives for regional and national cup or team play.

The NCSL treasurer will inform the state association of any club or team not in good standing financially with the NCSL so that this may be taken into account in appropriate instances.

The NCSL sit-out requirements for red card ejections and compliance with the accumulated point system is an honor system and each team is responsible for tracking its own cards, serving sit-outs for red cards and accumulated points according to league rules, and for providing proof of sit-outs through opponent verification. The R&D Committee monitors each team's compliance with the need to serve required sit-outs and will impose additional penalties against any player, coach, or team for failure to complete required sit-out(s) in the next NCSL game(s) and provide appropriate opponent verification. See sit-out procedures for documenting and obtaining appropriate opponent verification of sit-outs performed.

Any player or coach required to perform a sit-out is ineligible to participate in his team's next NCSL match. If opponent verification is not provided as required under sit-out procedures, the player or coach is deemed not to have sat out the required match and the team is deemed to have played the match with an ineligible player or coach, as the case may be.

All games played with an ineligible player or coach will be forfeited by the R&D Committee and/or Chairman.

The penalty for failure to provide opponent verification of a required sit-out is as follows:

- R&D suspension or Red card to a player- the player will be suspended for three games and the player's coach will also be suspended for three games.
- R&D suspension or Red card to a coach- the coach will be suspended for three games.
- Accumulated points suspension for a player- the player will be suspended for two games and the player's coach will be suspended for one game.
- Accumulated points suspension for a coach- the coach will be suspended for two games.

The R&D Chairman will review each case of failure to provide verification of a required sit-out and will notify the team that the above penalties are being imposed. If a team has more than one case of failure to provide verification of required sit-outs, the team may be required to appear before the R&D Committee, where additional sanctions may be imposed.

Section XIII New Club Application

NCSL encourages strong soccer clubs to submit applications to become member clubs of NCSL. An application for membership in NCSL can be downloaded from the NCSL web site at www.ncsl-soccer.com (posted under Other Important NCSL information) or can be obtained from the League Administrator at National Capital Soccer League, P.O. Box 11458, Alexandria, VA 22312.

For an application to be considered, it must be accompanied by a nonrefundable check made payable to NCSL in the amount of \$500.00. The deadline to apply for the next Fall season is March 15th and the deadline to apply for the next Spring season is September 15th.

To insure that only competitive and sustainable clubs petition to join the NCSL, all new clubs must meet the following criteria:

- A minimum of five Travel teams U10 or older (two must be U13 or older) that have demonstrated a level of play consistent with NCSL. Records documenting their previous play and copies of their official, stamped, state-approved roster must be provided. The rosters are retained in league files and are not made public in any way.
- A commitment that at least five teams will enter NCSL upon the club's acceptance. (Exception – if U15-U19 teams are included and are sitting out due to a school conflict the new club will have one additional season to satisfy this requirement, but must identify and document all teams it will

- enter.) Failure to follow through on this commitment will forfeit the club's membership.
- A sufficient number of home game slots on fields of appropriate sizes. Documents must be provided for either ownership or authorized use of at least one field of appropriate size for every four teams participating in league play.
- Sponsorship by at least one current NCSL club that has agreed to send a representative to speak at a Board meeting or provide other public declarations on behalf of the applying club.
- An appropriate code of conduct for players, team officials and spectators.
- Records of the club's incorporation, bylaws and affiliation with a state association.

Once a valid application is received at the league offices, it will be forwarded to the NCSL New Club Admissions Committee (NCAC) and will be reviewed by the committee members. The NCAC will interview key officials of the applying club and may make a site visit. The NCAC will then present its evaluation at a meeting of the Executive Committee, at which time representatives of the applying club will be invited to make a personal appearance to respond to questions of the Executive Committee.

The evaluation will take into account the following factors:

- The number of teams that are at the top levels of ODSL, BBSL, OBSL, MSI Classic or similar leagues, or have competed successfully in tournaments against NCSL teams.
- The number of age groups in which the club has teams, in order to demonstrate a progression of development and a record of sustainability. Older teams should have made the transition from small-sided play to full-sided while keeping the team identity and a core group of players.
- A credible argument that quality players are available to the applying club without engaging in non-productive competition for players with any existing NCSL clubs.
- The club's history of developing and retaining players rather than finding players who were trained elsewhere.
- Home fields within a reasonable driving distance. The NCSL epicenter is approximately at Tysons Corner, and the NCSL geographic boundary is roughly marked by Baltimore, Frederick, Winchester, Fredericksburg and St. Mary's.
- The number and quality of playing fields, particularly the type of surfaces of fields either owned by the club or permitted to the club in the most recent seasons.
- A description of the club's program to develop and review coaches.
- A description of the club's program for player development.
- The administrative structure of the club, including the full range of club officials and their soccer background as players, coaches, trainers or administrators and any additional background as leaders in civic, recreational or other organizations.
- A general assessment that key club officials have an understanding of NCSL rules and philosophy.
- Other unique factors.

The final evaluation, including input from the Executive Committee, will be presented at a meeting of the NCSL Board of Directors. One representative of the applying club will also be allowed to make a brief presentation. This person will be asked to depart prior to any discussion and vote by the Board. Subsequently, the club will be notified of the outcome. Clubs not accepted into NCSL will be informed of the general reasons why the candidacy failed. Clubs not accepted into NCSL may apply again, but only after the passage of two years.

If accepted, a club may enter as many teams per age group as permitted under the regular rules, except in age groups with a waiting list. In age groups with a waiting list the club may enter one team. In these age groups, once a team of the new club has been placed in a division by NCSL, the size of that division will be expanded by one team so that no team on the waiting list is disadvantaged. This opportunity is

available only for the club's first season.

New clubs that have been accepted will automatically be placed on two years of probation. At the end of this period the NCAC will conduct a review and recommend to the Board whether the club should be granted full membership, be continued on probation or be dismissed from NCSL. The Board shall make the final decision.

The criteria to be used in this review will include:

- The club's record of adhering to administrative deadlines.
- The record of attending Board meetings.
- The behavior of players and coaches as reflected in disciplinary points and R&D actions.
- The number of forfeits compiled by club teams.
- Maintenance of game fields of a sufficient number and quality.
- The number of club teams participating in NCSL, not to be fewer than three per seasonal year. (Failure to meet the required number will result in immediate expulsion.)

Appendix I – US Youth Soccer Age Groups, League & State Fees for 2017-2018

Age Divisions

The chart shown below is to show the Maximum Age a player may be in each particular age group for League and Cup Competition. **A player may only be rostered to one (1) NCSL team at a time.**

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Birth Dates</u>
Under 19	Jan 1, 2000 - Dec 31, 2000
Under 18	Jan 1, 2001 - Dec 31, 2001
Under 17	Jan 1, 2002 - Dec 31, 2002
Under 16	Jan 1, 2003 - Dec 31, 2003
Under 15	Jan 1, 2004 - Dec 31, 2004
Under 14	Jan 1, 2005 - Dec 31, 2005
Under 13	Jan 1, 2006 - Dec 31, 2006
Under 12	Jan 1, 2007 - Dec 31, 2007
Under 11	Jan 1, 2008 - Dec 31, 2008
Under 10	Jan 1, 2009 - Dec 31, 2009
Under 9	Jan 1, 2010 - Dec 31, 2010

League Fees

League fees are due with each club's application for entry. (See calendar on the NCSL website for due dates). Fees are based on the cost of league operations including, referee fees (referee assignor fees, assignor administration and bookkeeping fees), printing, postage, supplies, trophies, telephones, etc.

Under 9, 10, 11	\$405	30-minute halves 1 referee
Under 12	\$710	35-minute halves 1 referee
Under 13	\$710	35-minute halves 3 referees
Under 14	\$735	35-minute halves 3 referees
Under 15, 16	\$805	40-minute halves 3 referees
Under 17	\$895	45-minute halves 3 referees
Under 19, Fall	\$895	45-minute halves 3 referees
Under 19, Spring	\$665	45-minute halves 3 referees

Club Dues

Each club must pay seasonal dues in an amount set by the Executive Committee.

Please make sure that fees to the league from each club come in **one club check**. **The only exception to this policy is for waiting list teams, who must turn in separate checks.** *State fees subject to change.

Appendix II - Leaders Code of Conduct

The purpose of the National Capital Soccer League is to provide youth soccer players the opportunity to develop soccer skills through a high level of competition. As a leader in the NCSL - as coach, assistant coach, manager, or trainer - I understand the importance of the role I play in the lives of my players, and I accept the great responsibility this places on me. In carrying out these responsibilities, I accept the following code of conduct:

- I will promote growth and development in a positive and supportive manner. I will nurture good sportsmanship and fair play by teaching and personally demonstrating my commitment to these virtues.
- I will teach and demonstrate respect for the Laws of Soccer. I will insist on the highest respect for soccer officials by players, parents, and fans. I understand that dissent is contrary to the Laws of Soccer and that criticism of officials could destroy the game. I will abide by NCSL's rules and procedures.
- As a head coach, I understand I am responsible for the behavior of my teams' assistants, parents and fans at League games.
- I will respect the players on my team and on other teams. I understand that soccer is merely a game, and that players and coaches on other teams are my opponents, not my enemies. I will teach my team to appreciate how the variety and diversity of players in our league makes the league richer and more rewarding.

(Signature)

Date

Printed Name

Title

Club Name

Team Number

Appendix III - Players Code of Conduct

It is a privilege to be a player in the National Capital Soccer League. I understand I must follow the rules written below to remain a player in good standing in the League:

- I will respect the game of soccer and its laws. I will learn these laws and try to follow them. I will play the game fairly. I will abide by NCSL's rules and procedures.
- I will show respect for the authority of the referee, even though I will sometimes disagree with his calls.
- I will show good sportsmanship before, during, and after games. I understand that soccer is a game, and that the players on the other team are my opponents, not my enemies.
- I will help parents and fans understand the Laws of the Game so they can watch and enjoy the game better. I will be sure they understand that dissent is not permitted in the NCSL.

(Signature)

Date

Printed Name

Club Name

Team Number

Appendix IV - Parent Code of Conduct

Soccer is a wonderful sport and a passionate game. We should always remember our attitude is contagious. The referees, the players, the coaches and the fans should come together to match wits and skills. The other team is our opponent not our enemy and thus should be treated with respect.

While winning is important, playing well and fairly is the essence of the game.

- I/we will set a good example to my/our child in his soccer development by adhering at all times to the following:
- We will not criticize the referee openly or directly ... during or after games. Any criticism shall be done in writing (to my club or the NCSL), not verbally.
- We will only give positive feedback to players.
- I will abide by NCSL's rules and procedures.
- We will cheer at all games within the spirit of fair play and shall do our best to cheer the effort regardless of the outcome. We will be mindful in "lopsided" games where cheering our own "winning" team might be misunderstood.
- We shall do our best to teach our players to become students of the game.
- We shall find the "little successes" that our children have during each match.
- We shall show the quality of our sportsmanship during and after each and every match and help our child remember to thank the referee after the match without regard to the result.
- We shall do our very best to have our child prepared for every match.
- We shall support the learning effort of the players, coaches, and the referees by demonstrating our patience.
- We understand that improper behavior at a match may result in a parent being asked to leave the field by the referee, the TSL or a club official so the coach does not receive a yellow card caution or even a red card ejection due to the actions of the parent spectator.
- We shall leave the coaching to the coach during match. We shall do our best not to give our child instructions during the match.
- We understand that (upon review) the NCSL can, and will if necessary, suspend our individual privilege to watch our child play should we behave in a manner that is rude or otherwise offensive.
- We agree to do our best to have as much fun watching the game as the players should have playing the game.

(Signature)

Date

Printed Name (Circle one Mother, Father, Guardian)

Club Name

Team Number

Appendix V – Maryland Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse

The following guidelines and procedures are established for our staff, volunteers and participants. All members of MSYSA are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines. Coaches, players, managers, club team officials, and volunteers that are registered through MSYSA are expected to adhere to this policy.

Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. MSYSA does not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators.

Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.

Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but not limited to, making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.

All coaches, officials, and volunteers are appointed through the registration process as protection advocates of this policy. Every member is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward participants by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.

MSYSA recommends that every activity sponsored by its member organizations put a BUDDY SYSTEM in place. Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during sponsored activities. No child should go anywhere - to the bathroom, locker rooms, or other location, without his or her buddy.

To further protect youth participants, as well as the coaches, volunteers, and officials, we strongly recommend that no adult person allow himself/herself to be alone with a child during sponsored activities.

- Do not drive alone with a child participant (other than your own children) in the car.
- Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room.
- If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of in a private setting.

When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms.

Children should be empowered to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns and fears are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

The MSYSA board of directors and the risk management committee will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. This information will be communicated to the authorities for investigation and will be reviewed by the organization's directors. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.

Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by the board until the matter is resolved. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges, may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his/her former position.

Our mission is to promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; and they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

Appendix VI - Virginia Policy on Misconduct by Coaches

July 1, 2000

Section 1. In this policy-

- (1) "Coach" means a coach, assistant coach, team manager, or other team official.
- (2) "Federation" means the United States Soccer Federation, Inc.
- (3)
 - (A) "Misconduct at a referee" means persistent statements or physical acts at a referee at a game, that do not constitute referee assault or abuse as provided under Federation Policy 531-9, but that mistreat the referee or are inappropriate or unacceptable statements or acts, and include the following:
 - (i) excessive incidences of foul or abusive language at the referee.
 - (ii) statements that diminish the authority of the referee.
 - (iii) statements or acts that serve to intimidate without threatening physical harm to the referee.
 - (B) Examples of misconduct that arise under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph (3) include the following: confronting the referee without physically threatening the referee; spitting on the ground or in the air but not at the referee; throwing or kicking an item as a sign of disrespect or dissent but without the chance of hitting the referee; re-entering the field. These are only some of the examples of possible misconduct and are not all-inclusive.
- (4) "Referee" means the following:
 - (A) Any currently registered Federation referee, assistant referee, 4th official or other individual appointed to assist in officiating a game; (B) any non-licensed, non-registered individual serving in an emergency capacity as a referee as provided by Federation Policy 531-8; and (C) any club assistant referee.
- (5) "VYSA" means the Virginia Youth Soccer Association, Inc.

Section 2. This policy only applies to a coach in the following situations:

- (1) If a proceeding is brought against the coach for referee assault or abuse, or both, under Federation Policy 531-9; or
- (2) If the coach is ejected from a game and, after the ejection, engages in conduct that is misconduct under this policy.

Section 3. If a coach is found to have committed misconduct under this policy, the coach shall be suspended at least the next 3 scheduled games. This suspension is in addition to any other suspension that may be imposed on the coach by a club or league.

Section 4. The Board of Directors of VYSA delegates to the VYSA Adjudication Committee its authority to carry out this policy. In carrying out this policy, the Committee shall conduct hearings and follow hearing procedures applicable to allegations of referee abuse. A decision of the Committee is a final decision of VYSA.

Appendix VII- Team Manager's Game Day Checklist

Pregame

- Ensure State Roster, game day rosters and player passes are in order (putting players in same order makes for a smoother check-in)
- Appoint someone as TSL and make sure they understand their duties
- Contact opposing team and discuss any issues

Game Day

- Home team checks field ensuring it is ready for play (goals anchored, nets attached, field lined, corner flags present)
- If inclement weather, check and follow NCSL rules

30 Minutes Before Game

- Managers complete game card: fill in game number, date, time, etc., affix game day rosters, list sit-outs, list TSL and have coaches sign
- If appropriate, fill out sit-out documentation
- If appropriate, ensure STARs are available, dressed, etc.

15 Minutes Before Game

- Meet with referee
- Assist with player check-in
- Note any sit-outs
- Ensure TSL introduces him/herself
- Ensure each adult on team side has sideline pass

After Game

- Verify score/cards (yellow/red) with referee

Appendix VIII - Player's Guide to Red Cards, Yellow Cards and Accumulated Disciplinary Points

When a player gets a red card or two yellow cards during a game, s/he is ejected from the game and two penalties are given. First, the player must sit-out the next league game and is assigned 10 cumulative disciplinary points

When a player gets a yellow card during a game one penalty is given. The player is assigned 5 cumulative disciplinary points.

When the player's points add up to 20 he must sit-out the next league game. A red card sit-out does not count for the accumulated disciplinary point sit-out. If a player gets a red card in a game he must sit-out the next league game and he has 10 accumulated disciplinary points. If he gets another red card in a later game in the season, he must sit-out the next TWO league games, one for the red card, and one for the 20 accumulated disciplinary points.

If a player gets four yellow cards in four different games in a season, he must sit-out the next league game because he has 20 accumulated disciplinary points. Any combination of red and yellow cards that totals 20 points, results in an accumulated disciplinary point sit-out for the player. It is important to remember that a red card does not count for an accumulated disciplinary point sit-out.

Once a player reaches 20 accumulated disciplinary points and serves his sit-out, he must serve an additional sit-out each time he accumulates 10 points (at 30, 40, and 50 points) during the season.

At the end of the season, points do not carry over to the next season, but sit-outs earned due to red cards or accumulated disciplinary points carry over and must be served the first game(s) of the next season.

If a player changes teams, the sit-outs follow him and must be served with the new team.

If a player does not play during the following season, the sit-outs are owed when he returns to the league and must be served in the first game(s) of the season.

Red and yellow cards earned during tournaments, state cup games, scrimmages and indoor games do not count in a player's accumulated disciplinary point total.

It is important for coaches, players, and team managers to keep good records of red cards and accumulated disciplinary points because the league does not notify players or teams when sit-outs are due. Sit-outs served only count if they are properly verified by the player's team. If sit-outs are not served when they are due, the player, coach and team will face additional sit-outs, and/or fines and forfeit of games played with players in violation.

Appendix IX - NCSL Insurance Program Through VYSA & MSYSA

To receive VA insurance forms call the VYSA office at (540) 693-1430.

For MD insurance forms call MSYSA office at (410) 768-5401.

I. Accident Medical Expense and AD&D Benefits Policy

Insured Persons

All players, coaches, assistant coaches, and managers are covered by the accident medical expenses and accidental death and dismemberment benefits policy.

Covered Activities

The following activities are covered by this policy:

- while participating in scheduled practices or games or sponsored activity while under the supervision of team officials.
- supervised travels directly to or from scheduled games, practice sessions, or sponsored activity.
- while participating as a member of a tournament team in an official local or national tournament, including travel to, attending, and returning from, the city where the tournament is held.

Accident Medical Expense Benefits

The medical expense benefits coverage applies to covered activities up to \$100,000 in Virginia or \$300,000 in Maryland per incident for reasonable medical expenses incurred. There is a \$100 deductible.

Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefits

For insured persons for covered activities, the policy pays \$50,000 in Virginia or \$10,000 in Maryland for loss of life or 2 members (hands, feet, and eyes) and pays \$25,000 in Virginia or \$5,000 in Maryland for loss of one member. Payment shall be in addition to any other indemnity payable to the date of loss, but only one amount, the larger applicable amount shall be payable for all such losses resulting from one accident. "LOSS" shall mean, with respect to hands and feet, severance of the limb, with respect to the eyes, entire and irrecoverable loss of sight.

II. General Liability Insurance Policy

The General Liability Insurance Policy covers your club or league for damages that your club or league is required to pay to spectators and participants for bodily injury and property damage caused by an accident resulting from covered activities of your club or league. The limit of liability is \$2,000,000 per occurrence, \$5,000,000 per aggregate for Virginia and \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 per aggregate for Maryland.

III. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance Policy

The Directors and Officers Liability Insurance Policy covers liability for error, or misstatement or act or omission or neglect or breach of duty by an officer or director. The maximum liability coverage is \$6,000,000 per occurrence, \$6,000,000 per annual aggregate. This policy is being purchased by VYSA for the NCSL. There is not a separate charge to the NCSL for this policy.

This explanation is only for general information and does not amend or alter the insurance contracts themselves. The wording of each policy constitutes the only agreement between the insured and the insurance companies.

Appendix X - Lightning

Law V of the Laws of the Game says the referee “shall have discretionary powers to stop the game and to suspend or terminate the game whenever, by reason of the elements, interference by spectators or other cause, he deems such stoppage necessary.” This is the only referee guidance the Laws provide.

In the training of all referees, the safety of everyone at the field is of primary concern to the referee. There is no specific instruction given about when to stop play during threatening weather.

By way of definition, dangerous weather constitutes an unplayable condition, even if the storm has not yet broken. NCSL club representatives, coaches and referees should be advised that if dangerous weather conditions exist, a match should be suspended and replayed in its entirety at a future date. It should be pointed out that the safety of all is paramount, independent of any cost, inconvenience, or advantage due to the replay of the match.

Lightning Safety Guidelines

1. Remember that prevention and education are the key
2. Obtain a weather report *prior* to practice or games. When outside, listen to weather radio if you suspect a storm is approaching.
 - a. Know that the existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can strike as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.
 - b. When a storm is approaching, monitor the situation carefully.
 - c. No place outside is safe near a thunderstorm.
 - d. Open fields and elevated places are the most dangerous when it comes to lightning.
 - e. The activity with the fastest rising lightning casualty rate is outdoor sports and recreation.
3. Assess and Act On Immediate Risk by Using the 30-30 rule
 - a. At every practice, game, or outdoor event, a club or team official (coach, asst. coach, TSL, or appointed parent) should act as the lightning monitor(s). The monitor(s) must be responsible for assessing current weather conditions and relaying threat situations to the coach and or officials as appropriate.
 - b. If you can't see the lightning but do hear thunder, then lightning is close enough to strike you – seek shelter immediately.
 - c. If you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds or less, seek proper shelter immediately.
 - d. Wait at least 30 minutes after hearing the last thunder before leaving shelter and resuming play. (Referee should contact the League Office if there are concerns about lengthy delays and field availability.)
4. Take Shelter in a Safe Location
 - a. Remember that no place outside is safe near thunderstorms.
 - b. The best shelter is a large, fully enclosed, substantially constructed building.
 - c. A vehicle with a solid metal roof and metal sides is a reasonable second choice. Stay inside the vehicle with windows up – do not lean on the vehicle.
5. Avoid the most Dangerous Locations
 - a. Higher elevations
 - b. Wide open areas, including fields
 - c. Tall isolated objects, such as trees, poles, or light posts
 - d. Unprotected open buildings such as pavilions, picnic shelters, or bus stops
 - e. Metal fences and metal bleachers

No lightning safety policy guidelines will provide 100% guaranteed safety; however, following this guideline will help avoid most casualties or injuries.

Appendix XI - Special Team Assistant Referee (STAR) Program Rules and Procedures

Purpose

The NCSL STAR Program provides trained certified assistant referees to U12 and U13 matches when neutral assistant referees are not assigned.

STARs are expected to help others appreciate the difficult role of a referee in competitive youth soccer.

STARs are encouraged to officiate other games in NCSL, their house leagues, or elsewhere to gain experience and additional insight into the art of soccer officiating. The NCSL strongly encourages STARs to serve as assistant referees for other NCSL and area matches, especially those games that are immediately prior to or immediately following your team's match. However, if a STAR is selected to serve by their team, the STAR's primary duty on game day is to their team, not officiating other matches.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Each U12 and U13 team must identify at least two STARs, prior to the beginning of each season. STARs at U14 are optional and may be used, if needed.
2. All teams must enter the details of their STARs through their team page on the NCSL web site. This information is not public but is required to help NCSL manage STAR compliance
3. STAR names must be posted in the Team Contacts section of the NCSL website prior to the commencement of each season.
4. The minimum STAR level training course is USSF Grade 9 but STARs can be certified referees in USSF Grades 8, or higher. Individuals identified by their team prior to the deadline may be currently certified, or committed to becoming certified prior to the season in which they are entered.
5. Team Managers are responsible for ensuring their STARs are listed in the Contacts Section of the NCSL website.
6. Teams who have not complied with these requirements may be subject to a fine of \$50 per game until they are compliant with the STAR requirements. In addition, teams who have not been in compliance during the course of a season may be denied entry to the league in subsequent seasons.
7. Minimum age for an NCSL STAR is 15 years old, regardless of certification grade.
8. Coaches, assistant coaches, or trainers, listed on the roster of the participating teams may not serve as a STAR.
9. STARs may not serve as both TSL and STAR for the same match.
10. One individual may be listed as a STAR for no more than two (2) NCSL teams.
11. STARs who are Grade 8 or senior referees must not turn back previously accepted assigned league matches in order to perform their STAR responsibilities.
12. NCSL will pay the teams at the end of the season for the services provided by their STARs. A card is provided to each team at the beginning of each season for recording STAR services; this card is mailed to the NCSL office within three days of the last game of the season to request payment. The rate of pay will be the same as that for assigned assistant referees. No payment will be made for use of assistant referees who are not currently certified by USSF as they fail to meet NCSL requirements for STARs. Teams have discretion regarding whether to compensate their STARs.

TRAINING

1. The State Referee Programs of Maryland and DC/Virginia manage Training and Certification of assistant referees as required by USSF. The cost to certify is \$65 (\$40 for USSF registration and \$25 for the training class).
2. Assistant referees are initially certified in classes ranging from 9 to 18 hours depending on the level of certification sought by the individual referee. USSF Referee Grades 9 and 8 are acceptable entry classes for STARS.
3. All referees are required by USSF to recertify annually by attending a five-hour clinic and passing a USSF written exam. Recertification classes and clinics are generally conducted between the Fall and Spring seasons, but may also be available in August.
4. STARS may attend classes and clinics in any state, regardless of where they live.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

1. STARS must be dressed with the USSF approved uniform consisting of black shorts (without stripes or logos), black socks with three white horizontal stripes, the current USSF approved gold jersey, and the current year USSF badge. An alternate color jersey (black, red, or blue) may be worn at the discretion of the center referee when one team is wearing gold or yellow jerseys. However, STARS are not required or expected to own an alternate color jersey.
2. Footwear suitable for running is required. Black footwear is highly encouraged to present a professional appearance.
3. A basic uniform is available at prices ranging from \$36 to \$45 online from Official Sports Inc. and at several local retailers. In addition to the shirt, shorts, and socks, a first-time STAR will need an adhesive velcro disc for attaching the referee badge, cost about \$1.00. The badge is provided by the instructor at end of the class.
4. When at the field, including before and after the match, referees should present a professional appearance, including socks pulled up and shirts tucked in.
5. STARS may wear a hat. The hat should be a baseball cap type, and black, without any logo or seal except for that of USSF.
6. STARS must also have flags (provided by the center referee), a log for recording the score and other game events, pen or pencil, and watch.

GAME DAY PROCEDURES

1. Approach the referee and determine whether assistant referees have been assigned for the match. If two STARS are needed, each team may provide one STAR, should one be available from each team. If two STARS are needed and one team has none available, and one team has two available, the two available from one team will serve. If only one STAR is needed by the referee, and both teams have a STAR available, the STARS will decide among themselves who will serve. If they cannot come to a decision, the center referee will choose one STAR to serve the entire match. Two STARS may not share the duty of one position, whether from the same or opposing teams. If two positions are available and only one STAR is available, the one STAR may serve, and the center referee will determine whether or not to use another person for the second position.
2. STARS serve the entire match and will not be substituted except in severe extenuating circumstances, and only with the permission of the referee. In case a STAR fails to complete a match, the center referee has wide discretion on whether to replace the STAR with a certified referee, another person, or leave the position vacant.

3. STARS should meet with the referee at least 15 minutes before the scheduled game start, and from then until the end of the match should not participate with their team in warm-ups, training, administration, etc.
4. STARS serve as directed by the referee, who serves as directed by USSF, their state referee organization, and NCSL. During the pre-game meeting, the referee should instruct the assistant referees regarding field and equipment inspection, positioning, mechanics, and how in-and-out-of play, offside, fouls, etc. should be signaled. The referee has wide discretion utilizing assistant referees, including positioning the assistants, and directing the assistant referees whether or not to signal fouls.
5. Once the game begins, the STARS should not communicate with the players or spectators except in their capacity as a referee.
6. STARS must stay with the referee during halftime, not with their teams.
7. STARS should meet briefly with the referee after the match to discuss match events and ensure the game results (score, cautions and ejections, injuries, etc.) are properly recorded.
8. STARS must ensure the referee signs the orange team STAR cards so that their team receives payment for their services.
9. Teams are required to report STAR coverage when they submit their score reports to their division scorekeepers.

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions

Direct questions and comments regarding the STAR Program to the NCSL STAR Program Administrator listed on the NCSL web site.