



IT'S OUR GAME

**NORTH AMERICAN SOCCER LEAGUE
2016 OFFICIATING MANUAL**





This updated 2016 North American Soccer League Referee Handbook was produced by the NASL Operations Department in cooperation with the Professional Referee Organization (PRO) and two national associations, United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA).

The focus of this manual is to address all aspects affecting officials from when they arrive in market until they leave, including hotels, ground transport, game procedures, references to NASL Operations Manual and post-match procedures. The primary League designee for all matters concerning competition, logistics and officiating is NASL Chief Operating Officer Brian Melekian; contact information is listed below. For specific questions regarding match fees or travel reimbursements, please contact your respective contact:

North American Soccer League

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Professional Referee Organization

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United States Soccer Federation

Rick Eddy/Director of Referee Development
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Canadian Soccer Association

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Assignment Protocol

The Professional Referee Organization (PRO) will assign all Center Referees & Assistant Referees for 2016 regular season NASL matches in the domestic United States. US Soccer Federation will assign all 4th Officials. Canadian Soccer Association (CSA) will assign Center Referees, Assistant Referees & 4th Officials for all home matches of Ottawa Fury FC & FC Edmonton.

The 2016 postseason (those 3 matches comprising the NASL Championship) will be assigned by PRO or CSA, depending on where the match(es) is/are played.





Travel – PRO Bargaining Unit (BU), non-Bargaining Unit (Non-BU) officials & CSA Assigned Matches

Air Travel

For all matches for those Bargaining Unit (BU) and non-Bargaining Unit (Non-BU) officials assigned by PRO, air travel bookings will be handled by PRO's Travel Agent **Sportscorp Travel** (US-based matches). Generally, NASL Referees (or ARs and/or 4th officials, if applicable) travelling by air and through more than one time zone from their home to an assignment will be allowed to arrive in the match venue the day before match day and leave the day after the match depending on kickoff times and airline schedules with the final decision left up to PRO. Generally, Referees travelling to assignments within the same time zone and with flights lasting less than 2 1/2 hours (airline schedules permitting) should arrive in venue on the same day as their match and no later than 4 hours before kickoff. Again, all travel questions should be addressed to PRO. Non-BU officials should refer to the "NASL Travel Policy 2016_Non-BU officials" document provided below.

CSA-assigned officials for Ottawa Fury FC and FC Edmonton matches should contact the CSA personnel listed above for air travel arrangements.

All NASL Match Officials are also encouraged NOT to book air travel or expect to leave the match venue within 4 hours of the expected end of any NASL match so as to account for any in-match unforeseen circumstances (i.e. weather; or a serious player injury that causes a delay in play) that might occur and therefore might delay an official from leaving the match venue post match.

In addition, All NASL Match Officials who drive to their assignment are encouraged NOT to expect to leave the match venue earlier than 2 hours after the expected end of any regular season match so as to account for any in-match unforeseen circumstances (i.e. a serious weather issue; preparation of post match reports or a serious player injury that causes a delay in play) and therefore might delay an official from leaving the match venue post match. This applies to both PRO and CSA assigned match officials.

Hotels

ALL arrangements for Officials assigned by PRO (BU and Non-BU) are made through PRO's Travel Agent **Sportscorp Travel** in the US for any hotels needed for any match official who might arrive into the match venue the day before the match day and depart either on match day night (if the match is an afternoon kickoff) or on the day following the match day. This hotel information will appear on the Match Notice (see more on NASL League generated Match Notices further on in this Handbook) along with known hotel reservation details. CSA-assigned officials for Ottawa Fury FC and FC Edmonton matches should contact the CSA personnel listed above for hotel arrangements.

For flight travel and hotel booking needs please contact:

Sportscorp Travel
2 Holland Drive, Unit 9
Bolton, ON L7E 1E1

Phone: 905-857-8599
Fax: 905-951-0433
After Hours: 905-857-8588

Bernard Samuel
bsamuel@sportscorp.com
Direct Line: 905-499-3028

Jackie Ashton
jashton@sportscorp.com
Direct Line: 905-499-2052





Ground Transportation & Parking

The NASL requests that each assigned Referee Crew discusses and also confirms amongst its crew members as part of its pre-match email/phone communications exactly how they each individually and collectively are getting to and from the stadium on Match Day and/or to and from the airport and hotel on travel days if they are coming to the match via air or driving from a long distance. The League requests that this travel be done as efficiently as possible for all concerned and as outlined previously in this 2016 Handbook while utilizing any travel guidelines outlined in the previously published PRO or CSA travel policy manual.

Only NASL Match officials assigned to the match by PRO, USSF or the CSA will be provided secured complimentary parking on the day of match by the individual host team either thru the use of a physical pass or by having the name of the official(s) driving on a parking list at the parking lot entry gate. This is also coordinated thru the home team Operations Director or the home team Referee Liaison.



NASL Travel Policy 2016 – Non-Bargaining Unit (Non-BU) OFFICIALS

I. Assignment Procedures

a. All assignments will be posted on GameOfficials (GO) ~ 3 weeks prior to the match (Tuesday evenings) until Edge10 is ready. Instructions for Edge10 will be provided at that time. Assignments will be inputted in GO automatically after Edge10 becomes the primary system.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CALENDARS IN GO. WHEN EDGE10 IS READY YOU WILL NEED TO UPDATE YOUR CALENDAR IN BOTH SYSTEMS MANUALLY UNTIL THE PROCESS IS AUTOMATED. YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED WHEN THAT HAPPENS.

II. Travel

a. Driving

Officials driving 200 miles or less drive in the day of the match.

All officials assigned to a scheduled game must accept/decline the game within 24 hours if local/driving.

Officials using their personal vehicles for transportation to the match shall be reimbursed at the Standard Mileage rate as defined by the United States Internal Revenue Service, this rate is found in the 2016 NASL Expense Form.

b. Flights

In the event that an official resides 200 miles or further from the venue of the match, that official will have the option to fly into the match the morning of the match or the night before.

Coach or economy class is the standard fare class for all officials flying to any NASL match.

All officials assigned to a scheduled game that involves flights must make contact with the Travel agent within 24 hours to arrange travel. You will know travel has been approved when you receive your issued ticket via email. Once you receive your issued ticket, accept the game immediately afterwards. **DO NOT ACCEPT THE MATCH UNTIL YOU RECEIVE AN ISSUED TICKET – PRO WILL RESET THE GAME TO “ASSIGNED” STATUS IF AN OFFICIAL ACCEPTS A MATCH PRIOR TO TRAVEL BEING APPROVED.**

III. Travel Arrangements -- FLIGHTS

Officials flying:

- a. All flight travel arrangements will be made through SportsCorp, the travel agent of PRO.
 - i. Officials must contact SportsCorp within 24 hours of receiving an assignment notice.
 - ii. Airfare for the Referee will be approved up to \$800, airfare for ARs will be approved up to \$400 per AR.
 - iii. For flight travel needs please contact:

For flight travel needs please contact:

Sportscorp Travel
2 Holland Drive, Unit 9
Bolton, ON L7E 1E1

Phone: 905-857-8599
Fax: 905-951-0433
After Hours: 905-857-8588

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bsamuel@sportscorp.com
Direct Line: 905-499-3028

Jackie Ashton
jashton@sportscorp.com
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IV. HOTELS

All officials are entitled to hotel accommodation the night before the match, provided the match kicks off at 5 p.m. or later.

All officials may arrive in the Host city the day of the match provided the match kicks off at 5:00 p.m. or later but no later than three (3) hours before kick-off.

Hotels are booked by Sportscorp, and are pre-paid. Hotel rooms will be double occupancy for all non-BU officials. Hotel standards should meet those of a 3-4 star Marriott, Hilton, IHG or Starwood family class of hotel.

CSA-assigned officials for Ottawa Fury FC and FC Edmonton matches should contact the CSA personnel listed above for hotel arrangements.

V. EXPENSE FORM

NOTE – EXPENSE FORMS (WHICH INCLUDE GAME FEE) ARE SUBMITTED TO NASL AND WILL BE PAYED THROUGH GOPAY.

DO NOT SUBMIT EXPENSE FORMS TO JOHN LODER AT PRO OR THROUGH EDGE10, THEY WILL NOT BE PAID.

Please follow the instructions below for expense form submission:

i. Expense forms can be downloaded from PRO's Box account (NASL Officials Resources). Game fees are listed according to position, airfare and hotel costs are direct billed. Any associated cost such as baggage fees are the responsibility of the official unless pre-approved by NASL.

ii. Please use the expense form for your position – Referee or Assistant Referee.

iii. All other items and instructions are within the form. Email address for expense form submission to Daniel Kaufman at the NASL office is within the form.

iv. CSA-assigned officials for Ottawa Fury FC and FC Edmonton matches should contact the CSA personnel listed above for expense reports, instructions are within.





Match Procedures (NASL Operations Manual Sections listed below)

Field Regulations (Section 5.0)

Each Team must comply with field standards established by FIFA, along with any adjustments made by the NASL. To assist Teams with field standards, a sample guide to a Team's stadium field dimensions is provided in [Exhibit A](#). No changes must be made to the Stadium Field Plan unless approved by the League Office in writing. A representative from the Home Team must meet with the Referee at least SIXTY (60) minutes prior to the Game to assure the field is properly marked and in proper condition, the goals are in place and secure, the nets are properly fastened, the corner flags are in place, and the balls are properly inflated. **Each Team must work with its stadium to keep the color & width of soccer lines, grass conditions and equipment within FIFA specifications, according to Law 1.**

Fourth Officials' Equipment (Section 5.4)

The Home Team must provide a six-foot table and THREE (3) chairs (to be positioned at midfield between the Team benches) for the Fourth Official. The Home Team must also provide a substitution board or manual substitution paddles for use by the Referees.

Match Balls

The 2016 NASL Match Ball is provided by Under Armour. The Home Team will provide 10 new/like new match balls and have them ready for inspection by the Referee 90 minutes before each match.

Team Uniform Colors

Team colors listed on the Match Notice should be followed without deviation with only the Match Referee empowered to change specific team related colors from what is listed on the Match Notice should the referee feel the change is absolutely necessary to avoid color conflicts between teams. Reasons for the match day change of uniform color(s) – especially if it delays a team procession or kickoff etc. should be noted on the Referee Game Report form.

Home Teams should have their change uniform colors available at the venue and should be asked first to make any changes required, followed then by asking the visiting team to change. Both teams are required to travel with at least two different sets of goalkeeper shirt colors. (Note: Both the starting GK and the reserve GK should wear the same color shirts). The Referee is requested to verify the colors to be worn by both teams at least 75 minutes before kickoff either by going themselves directly and personally (or by having a member of his/her crew) go directly to visually check with each team OR by having the Home Team Director of Operations or the Referee Liaison bring BOTH sets of home and visiting team uniforms (including both starting & reserve goalkeeper colors scheduled to be used for the game) to the Referee Dressing Room pre-game.

Referee Uniforms

All NASL match officials must wear the assigned referee clothing for all 2016 NASL matches in the United States. The match officials assigned to specific games should check the Game Notice for the suggested Referee colors (Green/Red/Gold/Black or Blue Shirts) to be worn for their game. Referee shorts and sock colors will always be Black.

It is recommended that referee crews communicate amongst themselves in advance of travelling to the match city and game day to ensure that all four match officials wear the same shirt color and that they bring at least three different color alternate non-conflicting referee shirts to the stadium on match day.

CSA officials should be governed by this same suggested approach to their choice in game uniform colors.



Travel and day of game attire for all NASL referee crews should be governed by rules outlined by PRO or the CSA when their game officials travel to professional games. Sample uniforms are listed below.

Professional Referee Organization/United States Soccer Federation



Canadian Soccer Association



4th Officials

4th Officials can wear an official PRO, U.S. Soccer/OSI, or official CSA branded (or non-branded i.e. PRO or CSA logoed) black windbreaker jacket and/or black windbreaker-type long pants over their referee shorts on cold or inclement days. No other commercial identification is permitted. No patches or insignia bearing any mark besides PRO, U.S. Soccer/OSI, CSA or FIFA are allowed (i.e. no MLS logos).



Substitution Numbers

The Home Team will provide for the match officials in the locker room before the match a set of substitution numbers in different colors; one set usually outlined in red for the player leaving the match and one set outlined in green for the player entering the match. The set of two numbers will likely be a manual set and is not required to be an electronic sub board, although it may be.

Time of Day

All members of the match official's crew are encouraged to set their own time of day watches to the correct time of day via their own computer at www.time.gov or by calling 1-303/499-7111 before arrival at the match stadium. Either the Home Team Director of Operations or the Home Team Referee Liaison (if applicable) will do a time 'hack' before kickoff and after the match officials arrive at the stadium match day and that time of day setting should be considered official. Day of Game timelines will be provided in advance. Please check PRE-MATCH with the home team operations or referee liaison to be clear on all pre- and post-game referee and player introductions/ceremonies procedures as well as pre- and post-match field entry/exit paths as part of the referee crew's conversation with home team operations.

Game Officials' Locker Room (Section 6.6)

The Game Officials' locker room must be provided with soap, towels & a cooler containing sufficient ice, water and isotonic beverages. Coffee, tea, chewing gum, energy bars, bananas and other fruit will also be provided as practical.

Team Benches (Section 6.8)

Only Coaches, Trainers and Players on the Game Day roster must be permitted on the Team bench. Up to SEVEN (7) Game Day roster Players from which THREE (3) substitutions may be made may sit on the Team Bench. In addition, a maximum of SEVEN (7) non-playing personnel are allowed on each Team bench. These persons can either be Coaches or medical staff. Team Owners, General Managers, and other executives are not permitted to sit on the bench. Suspended players and/or coaches may not sit on Team benches. Injured players are allowed on the Team Bench.

Approaching Game Officials (Section 6.8.2)

Coaches, assistant coaches and other Team personnel may not enter the playing field to approach the Game Officials before, during, at halftime, or at the conclusion of any Game. Similarly, Team personnel must not confront Game Officials in the locker room, corridor, parking lots or any area surrounding the Game Officials' locker room. Game Officials should report such behavior in the Competition Incident Report Form ([Exhibit F](#)), and any such behavior is subject to League disciplinary action.

Ball kids (Section 8.2.8)

The Home Team must have a minimum of EIGHT (8) Ball Kids, ages THIRTEEN (13) and above. The Ball Kids must be stationed around the playing field as such: TWO (2) behind each goal and TWO (2) on each sideline. It is imperative that the Director of Operations assigns an individual supervisor to constantly oversee the performance and general comportment of the Ball Kids. Referees shall monitor the situation and report any difficulties.

Roster Collection (Section 9.4)

Not less than SEVENTY-FIVE (75) minutes prior to kick-off the Home Team Director of Operations must collect the Official Game Rosters from both Teams. Those TWO (2) individual rosters are then combined into ONE (1) Game Roster & photocopied.



Referee Liaison (Section 9.7)

The Home Team must designate a Referee Liaison to work with the Game Officials at each Home Game. The Referee Liaison must contact the Referee no later than THREE (3) days prior to the Game to confirm arrival and departure times, arrange transportation, and answer questions. If requested by the Referee, the Referee Liaison must ensure the Referees are at the stadium TWO (2) hours before kick-off.

Field Equipment & Safety Check (Section 9.9)

At least SIXTY (60) minutes prior to kickoff, the Game Officials must complete an inspection of the playing field and equipment, including the field itself, goals, netting, official Match Balls, corner flags, and field markings. In the event any problem areas are identified, including loose or torn nets, out of place goals, unanchored goals, improperly covered drainage, missing or incorrect markings, etc., the Referee must notify the Field Manager immediately. The Field Manager must be responsible for promptly correcting any problems. The Referee should report any and all field equipment problems accordingly. However, every consideration and effort must be made to start the Game as scheduled.

Protection of Game Officials (Section 9.12)

Each Home Team must provide a separate dressing room with showers at its Home stadium for the exclusive use of Game Officials, and must take the necessary precautions to ensure that no person, without the permission of the Game Officials, gains access to this dressing room. Each Team must provide adequate security for all Game Officials while they are at the stadium. Game Officials must report any breach of these provisions to the League Office. All reasonable efforts will be made to provide separate and equal dressing rooms for male and female officials.

NASL Complimentary Ticket Policy (Section 9.14)

The Home Team shall provide each Game Official with TWO (2) complimentary tickets to the Game upon arrival at the stadium. A 3rd ticket will be made available to each official upon request.

Officials and Starting Team Entry (Section 10.2.7)

The Game Officials and starting players must enter the field while the FIFA Anthem is played, in accordance with the Guidelines for FIFA Match Officials ([Exhibit D](#), "Game Day Timeline"). Each Team will provide an NASL Ball stand that allows the Referee to secure the Match Ball and enter the field.

Official Coin Toss (10.2.12)

The official coin toss must take place immediately after the Team handshakes and Team photos ([Exhibit D](#), "Game Day Timeline"). The Referee and Team captains must participate to determine who kicks off & the choice of ends to defend.

Dismissed Players & Coaches (Section 10.3.8)

Any player, coach or other bench personnel who is sent off or dismissed during a match must be escorted by a designated staff member to their respective locker room. They must remain in the locker room for the entire duration of the match.



Suspended Players & Coaches (Section 10.2.4)

Suspended players are only allowed to stay in a designated area, specified by each Team's Stadium/Field Plan, during the Game in which they are serving a suspension. Furthermore, suspended players are not permitted on the field of play for pre-game warm ups or during halftime. Suspended players are not permitted on the Team bench during the Game; however, suspended players are permitted access to their respective Team locker room during halftime.

Discipline and Infractions (NASL Operations Manual Section listed below)

Entering the Field (Section 12.3 D) A Player, Coach, or Team staff member entering the playing field during an NASL Game when not authorized to do so may be fined and/or suspended by the League Office. However, the NASL League Office may consider whether, during an altercation, it was appropriate for a Coach and assistant coach to be allowed on the field as "peacemakers".

Approaching Game Officials (Section 12.3 E) Coaches and Team staff must not approach Game Officials prior to the Game, at the end of the half, on the way to, or from, or in the locker room, or at any other time while the Game Officials are in the Home Team city, to lobby for a certain call or approach to the Game, or to criticize a Game Official's performance. The sole exception to this rule is a cordial handshake with the Game Officials that may occur on the field of play during warm-ups.

Unauthorized Contact

Only authorized NASL League office personnel (i.e. League Commissioner Bill Peterson, League Director of Legal & Business Affairs Rishi Sehgal, League COO Brian Melekian) or the Home Team Operations Directors are allowed to contact game officials prior to or after a match and only then to communicate specific match-related operations information about the stadium, weather conditions, important day of match safety issues or information on pre- or post-match ceremonies etc. or other information about the two teams. Match Officials are requested to report unauthorized contact by anyone other than those highlighted above to League COO Brian Melekian and PRO Management Staff (Alex Prus and/or Sandra Serafini).



Game Delay, Interruption, Postponement & Abandonment (NASL Operations Manual Section listed below)

Game delays, interruptions, postponements and abandonment are governed by this Section. Because of the possibility of Game delays or postponement, the Home Team's Director of Operations must have direct means for communication on their person at all times beginning two hours prior to any scheduled kickoff of a League Game until one hour following the conclusion of such League Game (i.e. cellular phone) with the League Designee. All relevant contact information shall be listed on each Game Notice. A match may be suspended or delayed by the referee during the "run of play" if conditions warrant; in no case, however, may decisions be made regarding further delays or suspensions without the input and authority of the League Designee, as listed on that particular match notice.

Authority to delay, interrupt, postpone or abandon a game (Section 13.2) A League Game may only be delayed, interrupted, abandoned or postponed by the Referee or the League Designee as set forth herein. The Home Team Director of Operations shall immediately communicate knowledge of any circumstance that could justify a Game delay, interruption, abandonment or postponement to the League Designee. Except with respect to safety concerns of the Referee, the League Designee shall have the ultimate authority whether to abandon or postpone a Game. The Referee shall have the authority to delay or interrupt a Game for purposes of inclement weather and/or other adverse conditions exist that are beyond the control of the participating Teams and which would jeopardize the safety of the Players, Game Officials or spectators.

Restart after Interruption (Section 13.4) In the event of any Game interruption, the Referee shall restart play after deemed safe to do so or permitted to do so by the League Designee. The Referee shall allow for the following warmup times which may be reduced upon agreement by the head coach of the Away Team and the Home Team:

For Game interruptions of less than 15 minutes, no warmup period shall be provided;
For Game interruptions between 15 and 30 minutes, a 5-minute warmup period shall be provided;
For Game interruptions between 30 and 60 minutes, a 10-minute warmup period shall be provided; and
For Game interruptions exceeding 60 minutes, a 20-minute warmup period shall be provided

When resuming a Game that has been interrupted, play must continue at the exact time at which it was stopped and Referees must utilize the appropriate restart per FIFA Laws of the Game.

Post-Game Procedures (NASL Operations Manual Section listed below)

Referee Evaluation Form (Section 9.17)

Each NASL coach must submit a Referee Evaluation Form as provided by the League Office, within 48 hours of the conclusion of each League game in which they participate, whether Home or Away.

Post Match Report (Section 10.4)

At the conclusion of the Game, the following post-game procedures must be followed. The Referee Game Report form must be emailed to the League Operations Department. Non-compliance with these deadlines may result in fines.



The Referee must complete and submit the Referee Game Report to the Home Team Director of Operations. Before leaving the stadium, the Home Team Director of Operations must scan the Referee Game Report and the two Team official roster forms (on one sheet of paper) and email it to individual(s) as indicated on the form. A copy of the Referee Game Report form is included in Exhibit C.

This form must be used by the Home or Visiting Team to request League Office review of Game incidents that may not have been dealt with by the Game Officials. The completed form and any applicable videotape shall be sent to the League Office as soon as possible and no later than TWENTY- FOUR (24) hours after the end of the Game. A "Competition Incident Report Form" is included in Exhibit F. This procedure may not be used to file a Game Protest (see Section 3.6 for such procedures).

Game Records (Section 10.4.3)

Following each Game, the Home Team's Director of Operations must distribute the appropriate number of DVD Game records as follows.

- (i) One DVD must be given to the Visiting Team's Head Coach or assistant coach prior to leaving the stadium;
- (ii) One DVD must be given to the Referee prior to leaving the stadium;
- (iii) One DVD must be retained by the Home Team;
- (iv) For ALL Games, a fourth DVD must be sent, within FORTY EIGHT (48) hours, to the NASL League Office.



2016 NASL Home Stadiums

Carolina RailHawks

Wakemed Soccer Park
201 Soccer Park Drive
Cary, NC 27511 (120 x 75 yds; Natural)

Ft. Lauderdale Strikers

Lockhart Stadium
5201 NW 12th Ave.
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309 (116 x 73 yds; Natural)

Jacksonville Armada FC

Baseball Grounds – Jacksonville
301 A Phillip Randolph Boulevard
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Minnesota United FC

National Sports Center
Stadium Field
1700 105th Avenue NE
Blaine, MN 55449 (115 x 72 yds; Natural)

Ottawa Fury FC

TD Place
1015 Bank St.
Ottawa, ON K1S 3W7, Canada

Rayo OKC

Yukon Miller Stadium
1777 S. Yukon Parkway
Yukon, OK 70399

FC Edmonton

Clarke Stadium
10839 91st Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T1Y 1L8 (106 x 68 yards; Artificial)

Indy Eleven

Michael A. Carroll Stadium
1001 W. New York St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Miami FC

Ocean Bank Field
11200 Southwest 8th Street
Miami, FL 33199

New York Cosmos

Shuart Stadium
Hofstra University
900 Fulton Avenue
Hempstead, NY 11549 (110 x 70 yds; Artificial)

Puerto Rico FC

Juan Ramon Loubriel Stadium
Bayamon, 00959, Puerto Rico

Tampa Bay Rowdies

Al Lang Field
230 First Street NE
St. Petersburg, FL 33701



2016 NASL Day of Game Operations Contacts

Carolina Railhawks
Jorge Acuna / Operations
919/459-0722 office
561/901-1438 cell
Jorge@carolinarailhawks.com

Ft. Lauderdale Strikers
Sean Young / Operations
305/728-2644 office
678/558-6818 cell
SYoung@Strikers.com

Jacksonville Armada FC
Marshall Happer / Operations
904/516-3760, 760 office
904/536-1223 cell
mhapper@armadafc.com

Minnesota United FC
Angie Blaker / Operations
763/792-7348 office
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angie.b@mnunitedfc.com

Ottawa Fury FC
Carrie Mckay
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Puerto Rico FC
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