



# THE UNITED STATES SOCCER FEDERATION, INC. POLICY MANUAL

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# THE UNITED STATES SOCCER FEDERATION, INC.

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## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to these Policies:

TERM	DEFINITION
10 Year Athlete <sup>1</sup>	An athlete who has represented the United States in a Delegation Event (as defined by the USOPC), World Championships, or another event designated by the USOPC (together with the USOPC AAC) and the Athletes' Council as an elite level event for purposes of this definition, within the previous 10 years.
10 Year+ Athlete	An athlete who has represented the United States in a Delegation Event (as defined by the USOPC), World Championships, or another event designated by the USOPC (together with the USOPC AAC) and the Athletes' Council as an elite level event for purposes of this definition, but not within the previous 10 years.
Administrative Commission	Eight Commissioners elected by the Youth or Adult Councils.
Adult Council	The Adult Council established under Bylaw 313.
Amateur Athlete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Amateur players currently registered through the Federation or an Organization Member, and actively engaged in amateur athletic competition sanctioned by the Federation or any of its Organization Members.</li> <li>b) All professional players or amateur players that have represented the Federation in matches or competitions.</li> <li>c) All professional players or amateur players that are eligible to represent the Federation in matches or competitions.</li> </ul>
Associate	An organization formed to advance a particular aspect of soccer, but not responsible for recruiting, training, fielding and funding of soccer players.
Athletes' Council	The Athletes' Council established under Bylaw 321.
Board of Directors or Board	The Board of Directors established under Bylaw 411.
Club	An organization of one or more soccer teams usually playing within a geographic area.
Disabled Service Organization	An organization formed with the primary goal of advancing and improving soccer for disabled individuals.
Federation	The United States Soccer Federation, Inc
FIFA	The Federation Internationale de Football Association of which the Federation is the national association member for the United States.
Individual Sustaining Member	The Individual Sustaining Member as established under Bylaw 232.

<sup>1</sup> Throughout these Bylaws, where an athlete representative must be a 10 Year Athlete, the following norms will apply: Time measurement for the 10 years is based on the date of the athlete representative's election/selection; this measurement applies without adjustment or expiration throughout the term of the position held by the athlete representative; in cases where the representative's seat derives from an underlying office (e.g., a corporation Board member serving on a Board committee, an NGB board member serving on an NGB committee, an AAC member serving on a corporation Board committee) this measurement is made as of the time of election/selection to that underlying office; and eligibility to serve as a 10 Year Athlete Representative may not be obtained through events that categorize entrants in age-restricted classifications commonly known as "Juniors," "Masters," "Seniors," "Veterans" or other similarly designated age-restricted competitions unless approved by the USOPC as an elite level event.



Indoor Professional League	A professional sports organization that has professional indoor soccer teams competing against each other.
International Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A game between two teams belonging to different FIFA national association members.</li> <li>• A game between two teams from the same FIFA national association member that is played at a site in another FIFA national association member.</li> <li>• A game involving an all-star team comprised of players of more than one FIFA national association.</li> </ul>
Life Member	A Life Member established under Bylaw 231.
National Affiliate	An amateur sports organization that conducts soccer programs in which players compete in at least 26 states of the United States.
National Association	<p>An amateur sports organization that conducts soccer programs in which players register and compete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in each of at least 26 states of the United States,</li> <li>• with at least 1,000 players in each of 26 states of the United States and</li> <li>• at least 200,000 players in the United States and</li> <li>• is a member of the Youth or Adult Council established under Bylaw 312 or 313.</li> </ul>
National Council	The National Council established under Bylaw 301.
Organization Member	An organization that is a member of the Federation as provided in Bylaw 202.
Other Affiliate	<p>An amateur sports organization that conducts soccer programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in which players compete in less than 26 states of the United States</li> <li>• but in 4 or more states of the United States</li> <li>• and is not a member of either the Youth or Adult Council.</li> </ul>
President	The Federation's President established under Bylaw 401.
Professional Council	The Professional Council established under Bylaw 314.
Professional League	A professional sports organization that has professional soccer teams competing against each other.
Professional League Standards	The minimum standards for a Professional League as adopted by the Board of Directors.
Seasonal year	Begins on September 1 of the calendar year and ends on August 31 of the following calendar year.
Secretary General	The Secretary General established under Bylaw 501
Sports Act	The Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, chapter 2205 of title 36, United States Code, as amended.
State Association	The administrative body within a territory determined by the National Council to carry out the Federation's programs for amateur youth or amateur adult players, or both.
Team	A group of soccer players playing on the same side in a soccer game.
Treasurer	The Treasurer established under Bylaw 402.
USOPC	The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee.
USOPC AAC	The USOPC's Athletes' Advisory Council
Vice President	The Federation's Vice President established under Bylaw 401.



Youth Council	The Youth Council established under Bylaw 312.
Youth Player	An individual who has not reached 20 years of age as of January 1.



## POLICY 102(3)-1 | NATIONAL COACHING PROGRAM

### Section 1 | United States Soccer Federation Coaching Courses

The United States Soccer Federation (“Federation”) shall issue coaching licenses and these courses shall be conducted solely by the Federation except as provided in Subsection B below. The course contents and all policies governing all Federation licensing and certificate courses will be determined solely by the Federation.

- A. The minimum age requirement for A, B, and C courses is 18. The minimum age requirement for D, E, and F course is 16. Further, entry to the E course requires an F license; entry to the D course requires an E license held for a minimum of six (6) months; entry to the C course requires a D license held for a minimum of twelve (12) months; entry to the B course requires a C license held for a minimum of twelve (12) months; and entry to the A course requires a B license held for a minimum of twelve (12) months, except as follows:
  1. A player or coach with three (3) years’ experience on the Men’s or Women’s Senior National Team and three (3) years coaching experience may apply for entry into a C course upon submitting proper documentation of his/her playing and/or coaching background. All waiver cases require the final approval of the Federation.
  2. A player or coach with at least five (5) years’ experience on the Men’s or Women’s Senior National Team and five (5) years’ coaching experience may apply for entry into a B course upon submitting proper documentation of his/her playing and/or coaching background. All waiver cases require the final approval of the Federation.
  3. A professional player or former professional player with at least five (5) years’ experience in a professional league, as defined in Federation Bylaw 109, and five (5) years’ coaching experience may apply for entry into a B course upon submitting proper documentation of his/her playing and coaching background. All waiver cases require the final approval of the Federation.
  4. An individual with a license of another FIFA national association that has been confirmed in writing by that national association may apply for entry into the course deemed appropriate by the Federation.
- B. State Associations (youth, adult, or joint) are permitted to conduct C, D, and E courses through their state coaching programs with approval and oversight by the Federation. The C course may also be conducted by a State Association upon permission of the Federation. Other Organization Members may also be permitted to conduct C, D, and E courses upon request and approval by the Secretary General.
- C. The A license is valid for a period of four (4) years after which time it must be renewed through the then current Federation continuing education program. Coaches with an expired A license will not be eligible to hold a state, regional, or national coaching position and must retake and pass the full A license course to regain the license. Coaches with an expired A license will thereafter hold a B license.

### Section 2 | State Director of Coaching or Technical Director

Each Youth or Joint State Association shall have a State Director of Coaching or a State Technical Director (hereafter referred to only as “State Director of Coaching”). The State Director of Coaching is responsible for (1) conducting D and E courses to meet the needs of the State Association’s coaching population, and (2) ensuring the courses follow Federation course requirements and policies. The State Director of Coaching may conduct these license courses or supervise course instruction by state coaching instructors.

- A. The State Director of Coaching:
  1. shall, subject to subsection (B), be appointed by the Youth or Joint State Association President;
  2. shall be in good standing with the Federation and its Organization Members;





3. shall hold current A license for a minimum of one (1) year. In the absence of a qualified coach having an A license, a B licensed coach may be named as “Acting State Director of Coaching” for a period of one (1) year during which time the coach must successfully be issued an A license to retain the position and be named State Director of Coaching. An A licensed coach who has been certified for less than one (1) year may be named “Acting State Director of Coaching” until the (1) year period has been reached at which time the full title of State Director of Coaching may be given; and
  4. must have confirmation by the Federation that the criteria listed in clauses (1)–(3) are met.
- B. Procedure
1. The Youth or Joint State Association President emails the proposed State Director of Coaching appointment with required references to the Federation for confirmation; and
  2. On receipt of confirmation, the coach is so appointed, and the Youth or Joint State Association President may announce the appointment.
- C. The State Director of Coaching is required to remain current on all content and policies by participating in all Federation workshops specific to the program.
- D. Each State Youth or Joint Association must submit current directory information to the Federation National Office at least annually and immediately upon change for all State Directors of Coaching and state coaching administrators. If a State Director of Coaching is not in place, an “acting” State Director of Coaching must be designated by the Youth or Joint State Association and approved by the Federation before that Youth or Joint State Association may conduct any further courses.

### **Section 3 | State Coaching Instructors**

State coaching instructors must hold an A license. These instructors may conduct D and E courses only under the direction of the State Director of Coaching or Federation. State Associations (youth, adult, or joint) may make a request to the Federation for an exception if an instructor does not have the required A license.

### **Section 4 | State Association Reporting Requirement**

Each State Association will, at a minimum, submit records via email, in a format designated by the Federation, to the Federation of new D and E licenses issued to coaches by January 31 for the preceding calendar year.

### **Section 5 | Exclusivity of Federation Licenses and Certificates**

Under no other circumstances than as provided in this policy may Federation approved licenses or certificates be issued or coaching courses be administered.



## **POLICY 102(4)-1 | LAMAR HUNT U.S. OPEN CUP**

### **PART I | ORGANIZATION**

#### **Section 101 | General**

The United States Soccer Federation shall conduct annually a competition of outdoor amateur and professional soccer teams of Organization Members of the Federation. The competition shall be known as the “Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup” (referred to in this policy as the “Open Cup”). This competition shall be recognized as the Federation’s National Championship, and information about the Cup, including the annual champion and runner up, shall be provided to FIFA and Concacaf.

#### **Section 102 | Open Cup Committee**

- A. The President shall appoint annually, subject to approval of the National Board of Directors, an Open Cup Committee. The President shall designate one of the members as Chairperson of the Committee.
- B. The Committee shall be responsible for carrying out this policy, establishing requirements and procedures for carrying out this policy and for conducting the Open Cup, and for the direction of the Open Cup.

#### **Section 103 | U.S. Open Cup Commissioner**

The Secretary General of the Federation shall designate a member of the Federation staff to be the Open Cup Commissioner. The Commissioner shall be responsible for the administration of the Open Cup in accordance with this policy and the direction of the Open Cup Committee.

#### **Section 104 | Adjudication and Discipline Panel**

- A. The Open Cup shall have an Adjudication and Discipline Panel. The Chairperson of the Open Cup Committee shall appoint the members of the Panel, to be composed of one representative from the Adult Council and one representative from each outdoor league in the Professional Council participating in the Open Cup during the competition year of appointment and at least one Athlete not competing in the Open Cup during the competition year of appointment. The Chairperson of the Open Cup Committee shall be the Chairperson of the Panel but shall not vote when serving as Chairperson of the Panel.
- B. The Panel shall have responsibilities as provided by this policy.

#### **Section 105 | Awards, trophies, and prizes**

The Open Cup Committee shall determine the awards, trophies, prizes and cost reimbursements to be granted each year, pursuant to the budget approved by the Board of Directors.

#### **Section 106 | Open Cup account**

The Federation shall maintain an Open Cup account. All receipts and expenses related to the Open Cup shall be credited and debited against that account. Any surplus and deficits shall be carried forward from year to year.

#### **Section 107 | Matters not provided for/and emergencies**

The Open Cup Committee may determine any matters not provided for in this policy. The Committee may also act to change matters included within this policy when emergency circumstances require and report the changes to the National Board of Directors of the Federation. An action of the Committee under this section is final.



## PART II – COMPETITION PROCEDURE

### Section 201 | Categories of competition

- A. Teams shall qualify for the Open Cup through one of the following divisions of competition:

1. Division I Outdoor Professional League;
2. Division II Outdoor Professional League;
3. Division III Outdoor Professional League; and
4. Open Division

All teams registered and competing in a Division I, Division II or Division III Outdoor Professional League (excluding those teams based outside the United States and teams otherwise ineligible under this Policy) shall be required to enter the Open Cup competition in each year in which they compete in an Outdoor Professional League. A youth amateur team applying to compete shall compete through the Open Division.

- B. The Open Cup Committee shall determine procedures for competition within each category of competition and among the categories, the order of competition among the categories, the number of winning teams within each category that are to advance to the next round of competition, dates of Cup matches, and other matters, to provide for the fair and orderly determination of an Open Cup champion each year. The Committee may authorize the organization or organizations within a category of competition to establish procedures for determining the winners within that category of competition. If the Committee so authorizes, the organization or organizations must submit its procedures to the Committee by a deadline established by the Committee for prior approval by the Committee.

### Section 202 | Team eligibility

- A. To enter the Open Cup, a team must be an outdoor soccer team based in the United States and a regular playing member in good standing competing in an ongoing league competition of an Organization Member of the Federation, with said league competition and Organization Member also in good standing with the Federation. Such league competition must be regularly scheduled (i.e. not infrequent) each year and formatted such that member teams play games against fellow members, with only these results (i.e. league matches) used to determine a set of standings or ranking table. The league competition must consist of at least four (4) teams, with each playing at least ten (10) league matches (excluding any pre- season and/or post-season playoff or cup matches) each calendar year.
- B. Division I, II and III Outdoor Professional League Teams:
1. To remain eligible throughout the tournament:
    - i. A team must remain a playing member within its club/league competition from November 30 of the competition year until the Open Cup Final;
    - ii. A team's league must be in operation from November 30 of the competition year until the Open Cup Final.
  2. Each league shall submit a list of all playing members planned for its upcoming season by July 1 of the preceding year.
    - i. Any team whose league is starting its first season of competition must be included in the league's Professional League Sanctioning application by July 1 of the preceding year, and the application must be approved no later than December 20.
    - ii. Any team starting its first season of competition in an existing Division I, II or III Outdoor Professional League must be included in the league's Professional League Sanctioning application by July 1 of the preceding year, and the application must be approved no later than December 20.



- C. Teams Entering Through the Open Division:
  - 1. To remain eligible throughout the tournament:
    - i. A team must remain a playing member in good standing within its club/league competition, starting from the Open Division entry deadline and continuing until the Open Cup Final for the competition year;
    - ii. A team's league must be in operation from the Open Division entry deadline until the Open Cup Final for the competition year.
  - 2. Any team whose league is starting its first season of competition must have started its league schedule at least thirty (30) days prior to the Open Division entry deadline.
  - 3. Any team starting its first season of competition in an existing league must have started its new league's schedule at least thirty (30) days prior to the Open Division entry deadline.
- D. For the purpose of this Policy, any team having not played in its league's regular competition for the full season ending immediately prior to the entry deadline for its respective competition division (e.g. Open Division, Outdoor Professional League) shall be considered a team starting its first season, whether in an existing or new league.
- E. Any Outdoor Professional League Team that is majority owned by a higher-level Outdoor Professional League Team, any Outdoor Professional League Team whose player roster is materially managed by a higher-level Outdoor Professional League Team, or any team that is majority owned by an Outdoor Professional League team, (2) registered with any Open Division League, and (3) registered as a professional team, shall be ineligible to participate in the Open Cup. The Open Cup Commissioner shall circulate a list of proposed ineligible teams for review by the Open Cup Committee. The Open Cup Committee shall review and determine team eligibility annually pursuant to this provision and report its decisions to the National Board of Directors.

### Section 203 | Player eligibility

- A. Teams entering the Open Cup shall use their official league roster as the basis for their Open Cup roster. Except as specified in this Policy or except as the result of discipline matters imposed by U.S. Soccer, all players on an official roster, once approved by U.S. Soccer's Player Status Department and the Commissioner, will be eligible for Open Cup competition, regardless of any status (e.g., injured reserve) each player may have with regard to league competition. Players on loan from another team or league may not be included on an Open Cup roster, with the exception of the following: 1) Loaned players originating from teams competing in leagues that are not active participants in the Open Cup Tournament or qualifying process (professional indoor leagues, foreign clubs, etc.); 2) players on loan from other US clubs for a period of greater than 90 days; or 3) players from teams who have been deemed ineligible for the current Open Cup competition due to the provisions of Section 202(d) and are loaned to the team exercising roster control pursuant to Section 202(d).
- B. Roster rules for competing teams:
  - 1. For teams entering the tournament by competing through Open Division qualifying rounds: Each team shall submit its roster, together with additional player information that has been requested, to the Open Cup Commissioner by a date set by the Open Cup Committee. Rules with respect to the maximum number of players, roster approval and freeze deadlines, and other features shall be determined by the Open Cup Committee and communicated and enforced by the Commissioner.
  - 2. For teams entering the tournament after all Open Division qualifying rounds have concluded: Two weeks prior to the first Open Cup Round in which a team participates, that team shall submit to the Open Cup Commissioner its Open Cup roster, together with additional player information



that has been requested by the Commissioner. A team's Open Cup roster shall not be frozen at any time during the competition. For Open Cup matches, a team may add players to or drop them from its league roster under the league rules currently in place. Any changes to a team's roster must be communicated to the Open Cup Commissioner and all clearances by the U.S. Soccer Player Status Department and the team's league must be confirmed to the Commissioner no later than 2 p.m. CT on the first business day prior to any Open Cup match in order for such changes to be in effect for said match.

C.

1. Any player who plays in any part of a match for an Open Division team in the Open Division qualifying rounds, may not be included in the Open Cup roster or play for any other Open Division team in the Open Cup competition for that competition year.
2. Any player who plays in any part of a match in the Competition's tournament proper may not be included in the roster or play for any other team in the Competition's tournament proper for that Competition year.

D. If any team plays an ineligible player in an Open Cup match, that team is subject to fines or other penalties, including game forfeiture, as determined by the Adjudication and Discipline Panel.

#### **Section 204 | Entering the Cup**

To compete in the Open Cup, a team must apply each year, on a form provided by the Federation, and pay an entry fee with the application for each year the team enters the competition. The application and entry fee must be submitted to the Federation by the deadline published in the Open Cup Handbook. Entry fees and deadlines may differ for different categories of competition. The Committee may also establish a requirement for teams entering the competition to submit a performance bond in a form and at levels as the Committee may deem appropriate.

### **PART III — PLAYING RULES**

#### **Section 301 | FIFA Laws of the Game**

FIFA Laws of the Game apply to Open Cup competition matches. If changes to the Laws are adopted to be effective after matches are first played involving any Division I, Division II or Division III Outdoor Professional League teams, those changes will apply to the next Open Cup competition and not the competition in progress.

#### **Section 302 | Venues**

- a. The Committee will publish a competition handbook that addresses venue requirements for the competition matches.
- b. The Committee may designate stages of the competition for which the rules set by the Handbook differ based on the round of the competition.

#### **Section 303 | Match play**

- a. The Committee will publish a competition handbook that addresses venue requirements for the competition matches.
- b. The Committee may designate stages of the competition for which the rules set by the Handbook differ based on the round of the competition.

#### **Section 304 | Match officials**

The Federation will assign all match officials, and determine the amounts of compensation for them, for all Open Cup matches except for those matches assigned by the Open Cup Committee to be overseen by an Organization Member of the Federation.



### Section 305 | Player and team official match discipline

- A. In addition to red and yellow cards the referee may issue to players and substitutes at a match, the referee also has the power to warn or show yellow or red cards to team officials who fail to act in a responsible manner and may send them off from the field of play and its immediate surroundings, including the technical areas and tunnel(s) to/from the locker rooms. If the offender from a specific team cannot be identified, the head coach present from that team will receive the yellow or red card. Each caution or send-off of a player, substitute and team official shall be included in the referee's game report.
- B. If any individual referred to in subsection (a) is issued:
  - 1. a red card, including a red card as the result of being issued 2 yellow cards in the same match, the individual shall be suspended for at least one Open Cup competition match; and
  - 2. each multiple of 3 yellow cards in Open Cup competition in one year (excluding 2 yellow cards received in the same match resulting in a red card), the individual shall be suspended for at least one Open Cup match.
- C. A suspension shall be served by the individual at the next Cup match or matches of the team of that individual. If the individual has no remaining Cup matches during the year, the suspension shall carry forward for up to the next ten year's Open Cup competitions (or twenty years in the case of suspensions imposed by the Adjudication and Discipline Panel) and be served at the individual's next Open Cup match for which he would otherwise be eligible.
- D. The Open Cup Commissioner shall review the circumstances concerning all red and yellow cards issued. If the Commissioner believes that the actions of the individual receiving the card or cards should be further reviewed to determine if a greater penalty than the minimum penalty should be imposed, the Commissioner will refer the matter to the Adjudication and Discipline Panel for further consideration. The Panel shall review a card matter referred to it and may impose a longer suspension period or impose a fine, or both.

### Section 306 | Protests and General Discipline

- A. A protest related to an Open Cup match must be filed in writing with the Open Cup Commissioner and delivered via hand-delivery, courier, certified mail, facsimile or electronic mail not later than 4:00 p.m., CT, the day after the match. A cashier's check or money order or wire transfer for \$500 made payable to "USSF" must be received by 4:00 p.m. CT the second business day after the match. The Commissioner shall immediately refer the protest to the Adjudication and Discipline Panel for decision.
- B. Anyone may file a complaint with the Panel about an action or inaction of an Open Cup team, individual, or group or organization participating in the Open Cup competition. The Panel shall determine if the conduct complained of is or would be contrary to the good of the game. The Panel shall take action it considers appropriate in regard to anyone involved in the complaint as provided by subsection (c) of this section.
- C. Except for overturning match results or mandating a replay of the match, the Panel may take any action it considers appropriate, including suspension or fine, or both, for any matter considered by it under this policy. The Panel may only consider mandating a replay of a game or advancing a team that lost if a protest has been filed. The Panel may exercise discretion in cases where a team submits a protest to the Commissioner after the deadline has expired ~~in the event that~~ if circumstances regarding the availability of information after the deadline warrant this discretion.
- D. A decision of the Panel under this policy is final and binding unless appealed to the Open Cup Committee. An appeal of a decision of the Panel must be filed in writing with the Open Cup Commissioner not later than 4:00 p.m., CT, of the day after receiving the decision of the Panel, accompanied by a cashier's check, money order, or wire transfer of \$500 made payable to "USSF". The record on appeal is limited to the record before the Panel. A decision of the Committee about



the appeal is final and binding.

- E. A party subject to a decision of the Panel or the Committee under this policy may not resort to the courts or other means for relief or restitution from the Federation. As a condition to entering or otherwise participating in the Open Cup, teams, players, and other individuals agree not to seek resort to the courts or other means for relief or restitution from the Federation.
- F. Where the matches are played solely under the auspices of, and delegated to an Organization Member of the Federation, such as in any qualifying matches prior to Round 1 of the Open Cup, the protest or complaint shall be referred to the appropriate Council or Member's Competition Authority and shall be determined according to the Competition Authority's, Bylaws, Rules, Policies and Procedures then in effect.

### **Section 307 | Forfeiture or failure to appear**

If a team forfeits or fails to appear timely for a match, the team forfeits the match and must pay a fine that is at least equal to 3 times the entry fee of that team. The Adjudication and Discipline Panel shall determine the amount of the fine.

### **Section 308 | Cancelled and Terminated Matches**

- A. Only the Match Commissioner may declare a match cancellation. The Match Commissioner must consult with the teams' General Managers, the referees and a U.S. Soccer representative before any game may be cancelled.
- B. Every attempt shall be made to play the match irrespective of how long the delay. Postponements shall be considered only in extreme situations, such as those that are beyond the control of the participating teams or could endanger the safety of the participants and spectators.
- C. If a match is cancelled because of weather or other act of God, the match must be rescheduled for the next day unless mitigating circumstances prevent this. In the event that the game cannot be rescheduled for the next day and the teams cannot within 24 hours of cancellation reach agreement on a new match date that is within 7 days of the originally scheduled date, the Commissioner will set the date.
- D. If a match is terminated after the end of the first half of a match, but before the end of the second half with one of the teams winning, and the termination is not due to the conduct of one of the teams, the match is considered complete, and the team winning at the time of the termination shall be the winner.
- E. If a match has kicked off and is terminated prior to the end of the first half or is otherwise tied at the time of termination and the termination is not due to the conduct of one of the teams, the match shall be replayed in its entirety if the rescheduled date is three or more days following the originally scheduled date. If the rescheduled date is within two days of the originally scheduled date, the match shall be restarted at the point of termination.
- F. If a match is abandoned because of the conduct of a team in the match, the other team shall automatically be awarded a win and the team engaging in the misconduct shall be awarded a loss. If a game must be abandoned due to the misconduct of both teams, the referee will file a complete report and the status of the game will be decided by the Open Cup Commissioner. The Commissioner will immediately refer the matter to the Adjudication and Discipline Panel for a recommendation before issuing a decision.





## POLICY 105 | EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

For the avoidance of doubt, the requirement that the Federation and its members shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status in Bylaw 105 applies to the Board of Directors and the National Council.

## POLICY 107-1 | USE OF FEDERATION LOGO BY MEMBERS

The United States Soccer Federation, Inc. has determined in order to standardize the presentation of its marks, as well as the marks of its various organization members, all use of the name or initials of the Federation or any use of its logos must be by written consent of the Federation as required in Bylaw 107.

- A. STATE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS** | Every State Association member shall display the U.S. Soccer Logo (below) preceded by the phrase “a Member of the United States Soccer Federation, Inc.” on all the following items produced by the State Association:
- Letterhead
  - Registration Forms (and/or information)
  - Player Passes
  - Publications/Membership Communications
  - Web Site Home Pages
  - Media Guides/Non-commercial Press Releases
  - All other “official publications” related to sanctioned programs
- B. ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION MEMBERS** | Every other category of membership within the Federation may display the U.S. Soccer Logo (below) preceded by the phrase “Member of the United States Soccer Federation, Inc.” on all the following items produced by the State Association:
- Letterhead
  - Publications/Membership Communications
  - Web Site Home Pages
  - Media Guides/Non-commercial Press Releases
  - All other “official publications” related to sanctioned programs
- C. PLACEMENT OF U.S. SOCCER LOGO** | The primary location for display of the U.S. Soccer Logo and its preceding accompanying phrase on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper shall be on the bottom of the page centered on line 9.89. In the case of a problem caused by issues of space at the bottom of the Members’ letterhead then the U.S. Soccer Logo may be displayed at the lower right corner of the page or the upper right corner of the page.

The use of the U.S. Soccer Logo and its preceding accompanying phrase may not be directly adjacent, connected to, or closely associated with any commercial marks, logo, or entity name without the express written permission of the Federation as required by Bylaw 107.







## POLICY 202-1 | PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES

### Section 1 | Structure

- A. There shall be the following competitive divisions for men's outdoor professional soccer (as soccer is described in the FIFA Laws of the Game):
  - 1. Division I;
  - 2. Division II; and
  - 3. Division III.
- B. There shall be the following competitive divisions for women's outdoor professional soccer (as soccer is described in the FIFA Laws of the Game):
  - 1. Division 1;
  - 2. Division 2; and
  - 3. Division 3.
- C. There shall be the following competitive divisions for indoor professional soccer:
  - 1. Division A;
  - 2. Division B; and
  - 3. Division C.
- D. The competitive divisions referred to in subsections (a)-(c) of this section shall consist of professional leagues. Each professional league shall be:
  - 1. certified by the Board of Directors (BOD) based on standards established under these policies;
  - 2. subject to the authority of the Federation;
  - 3. comprised of at least 8 professional teams certified by the Board of Directors; and
  - 4. subject to all rules and regulations of the Federation, autonomous in its operations.
- E. The professional leagues in the competitive divisions referred to in subsections (a)-(c) of this section shall consist of professional teams. Each professional team shall be:
  - 1. certified by the Board of Directors based on standards established under section 2 of this policy;
  - 2. in a professional league in a competitive division;
  - 3. subject to the authority of the professional league of which it is a member;
  - 4. subject to the ultimate authority of the Federation; and
  - 5. comprised of at least 12 registered professional players.

### Section 2 | General Provisions

- A. All players on professional teams in the Professional Leagues shall be registered with the appropriate Federation in accordance with FIFA and Federation requirements.
- B. There shall be consultation with the Federation in the scheduling of international and other representative matches involving professional players.
- C. All referees officiating in games of professional teams in Professional Leagues shall be registered with the Federation through a State Association in accordance with Federation rules, regulations, and policies.
- D. Each player contract with a United States Citizen with a professional team in the Professional Leagues shall include the following language: "Any United States citizen registered with the Federation shall be made available on request of the Federation for international games, FIFA and The Football Confederation tournaments, and Olympic Games competition, including preparation, qualification and final tournament matches." The Federation will cooperate with each professional league and professional team in establishing procedures for the use of players for such Federation purposes and, to the extent possible, in avoiding scheduling conflicts.
- E. No professional league may admit teams into the league in violation of these policies.



### Section 3 | Rules and Discipline

- A. Every professional league must have its own Rules and Discipline Committee (RAD).
- B. Each professional league must have a written plan for determining the imposition of rules and discipline internally to the league, regarding players, owners and all similar or other events related to league operations that are subject to the jurisdiction of the Federation. Well developed due process, documentation, and procedural mechanisms must be included in these plans.
- C. Each league must have rules to cover disputes or complaints and events that occur internally and externally to the league in five categories:
  - 1. a complaint about events that occur on the field of play during a game, pre- game or post game, affecting some component or outcome of the game. These complaints have a direct bearing on the game, future games and/or a game's outcome:
    - i. players, field and or bench including coaching and/or statistical or other persons supportive of the game itself.
    - ii. management, coaches, trainers and related personnel.
    - iii. fans, spectators or camera-media persons.
  - 2. A complaint between team management and another team's management and/or players that is not about events upon the field or surrounding a game. These complaints are purely business and have no direct impact on a game's outcome.
    - i. a complaint about the league, league office, staff member and/or league official.
    - ii. a complaint about a referee, assistant referee, or related official.
    - iii. a complaint about a professional player of the league the events of the complaint originating externally to the professional league (recreational, amateur or other non-league events) that will be evaluated by the professional league's rules and discipline process for the possible imposition of sanctions against the player within the professional league.
- D. Each of the complaint processes must include structured and timely due process practices and documentable processes that create a professional and complete record of the handling of the complaint from filing to resolution. The Federation Appeals committee will be capable of being the final appealable step in each of these professional league practices.
- E. All professional leagues must have a complete RAD process in place. One complete copy of each league's rules must be provided to the Federation Office.
  - 1. All externally generated complaints, rules and discipline originating from any other member of the Federation family shall be determined under Part VII of the Bylaws.
  - 2. All actions of any kind being undertaken by any Federation Organization Member regarding any person involving and/or against any professionally registered player, coach or league official of any description originating externally to the professional league must be immediately reported by the individual under external review (player, coach, etc.) to the league designated official in the RAD process. Each league may designate the form of this notification, but it must be in writing and a copy is to be sent to the USSF National Appeals Committee in Chicago.
  - 3. This notice to the league RAD official must take place within 72 hours (exclusive of Saturday and Sunday) of when notice was provided to the affected individual of the impending action against that individual by the Federation Organization Member of FIFA entity. Should this notice not be timely and honestly provided to the league and Federation the penalties imposed by the affiliated entity (if any) will without exception be mirrored by penalties imposed by the league itself against the player. By example, if the notice is not provided the league and Federation, then a penalty of three (3) months suspension would be imposed in



every Federation related or affiliated entity without exception if that were the penalty meted out in the other entities hearing.

4. Should the player or other person being evaluated for a potential rules violation externally to the professional ranks provide notice to his or league, as indicated in these rules, then and only then will the professional league have the ability to hold off discipline internally to that league's games and events until the process involving the player is completed externally. The league official must monitor the external process and must be provided a copy of all documents and other data regardless of form (tapes, videos, print, etc.) utilized or available for utilization in the hearing and appeals processes which occur against the professionally registered or designated individual.
  - i. Provision of these documents is to be ongoing and cooperative as the process of the hearings and potential appeals occur.
  - ii. The professional league does not need to wait until the external process is concluded against the individual and is encouraged to make a case-by-case decision whether to wait or not and to balance the best of interests of the professional game, availability of facts and testimony and other professional requirements in deciding when to move to a decision within the professional league that impacts the individual. These decisions must look to a balancing of the good of the game and our social soccer culture at all levels.
5. Should the individual player not provide timely notice of the impending external inquiry to the professional league, the penalties imposed external to the professional league will be identical at every level of the game.
6. The professional league will be capable of imposing any penalty deemed reasonable within the professional league (upon proper notification processes by the player as detailed above) for the events that occur external to the league so long as these penalties, imposed or avoided, do not violate other rules and requirements of the Federation and/or FIFA regarding such matters.
7. The penalties (if any) imposed by the non-professional Federation organization will be applied universally within the Federation family with the possible exclusive exception of the professional league, penalties, or avoidances, noted under the circumstances and requirements as detailed above.
8. Every professional league decision on such matters must be reduced to writing and provided upon a timely basis to the Federation National Appeals Committee. The report should provide a case history and detailed writing of the process undertaken, facts considered and the decision's underlying significance to the professional league, especially when a decision is made that reduces the imposed penalties within the professional league below that of the external entity's decision.

## **POLICY 202-2 | PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES POLICY AGAINST REFEREE ASSAULT**

### **Section 1**

Misconduct against referees may occur before, during and after a match, including travel to and from a match.



## Section 2

All Professional League Members shall adopt and enforce policies prohibiting misconduct against referees that meet the following minimum criteria:

### A. Referee Assault.

1. Any player, coach, manager, club official, or league official who commits an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee ("Referee Assault") shall be suspended without pay for a period of at least six consecutive matches (the "Assault Suspension"). The Assault Suspension shall commence with the first match after which the individual has been found to have committed this act.
2. For purposes of this subparagraph 2(a), "Referee Assault" shall include, but is not limited to: striking, kicking, choking, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; spitting on a referee with ostensible intent to do so; kicking or throwing an object at an official that could inflict injury; or damaging the referee's uniform or personal property (e.g., car, uniform, or equipment).
3. The Professional League Member may not provide for a penalty shorter than the Assault Suspension but may provide for a longer suspension and/or a fine.

### B. Referee Abuse.

1. Any player, coach, manager, club official, or league official who threatens through a physical act or verbal statement, either explicitly or implicitly, a referee ("Referee Abuse") shall be suspended for a period of at least three consecutive matches (the "Abuse Suspension"). The Abuse Suspension shall commence with the first match after which the individual has been found to have committed this act.
2. For purposes of this subparagraph 2(b), "Referee Abuse" shall include, but is not limited to: verbal and nonverbal communication which contains foul or abusive language and which implies or directly threatens physical harm; spewing a beverage on or spitting at a referee or the referee's personal property.
3. The Professional League Member may not provide for a penalty shorter than the Abuse Suspension but may provide for a longer suspension and/or a fine.

### C. Referee. For purposes of this section 2, a "referee" shall include the referee, assistant referees, and fourth official.

### D. Match. For purposes of the Assault Suspension and the Abuse Suspension, a "match" shall mean any official match of that individual's team in the Professional League Member for which there is paid attendance, i.e., regular season, playoff, officially sanctioned cups and tournaments, and international games played in the United States.

## Section 3

This policy shall apply only to players, coaches, managers, club officials, or league officials while participating in Professional League Member activities. The Assault Suspension and Abuse Suspension (the "Suspension") shall preclude the suspended individual from participating in any soccer competition until the suspension has expired.



### **POLICY 202-3 | PROFESSIONAL LEAGUE ALL STAR GAMES**

Professional League members of the Federation shall not have more than one “all-star game” per year. For purposes of this Policy, an “all-star game” shall mean any game in which a team’s roster is comprised of players from more than one league team and includes more than 5 players from the Federation’s National Team player pools.

### **POLICY 212 | REPORTING RISK MANAGEMENT DISQUALIFICATIONS**

Every Organization Member which has a risk management program shall submit to the Federation the following information within ten business days of any action, and again in a report submitted at least once per year: (1) the names and dates of birth of any individuals disqualified from participation or thereafter reinstated under the Organization Member’s risk management program and (2) the reasons such individuals were disqualified or reinstated.

### **POLICY 212-1 | PARTICIPATION IN AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS**

Preamble: The purpose of this policy is to clarify terms under which participants may participate in the various programs offered by Organization Members. This policy should be read in conjunction with Bylaws 212 and 603.

#### **Section 1**

For purposes of this policy, the following shall apply:

- A. “Affiliated Organization” means any Organization that is a member or identifiable subset of any USSF Organization Member.
- B. “Organization” means a club, league, team, association, or other group of Participants.
- C. “Organization Member” shall have the meaning set forth in USSF Bylaw 109.
- D. “Participant” means any player, coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official that is sponsored, financed, coached, organized, or administered by an Organization.
- E. Any reference in this policy to registering with, becoming a member of, or complying with the requirements of an Organization Member may include registering with, becoming a member of, or complying with the requirements of a member of that Organization Member.

#### **Section 2**

Every Participant in every Affiliated Organization must be registered with at least one Organization Member. A Participant may be registered with more than one Organization Member.

#### **Section 3**

If an Organization that is not an Affiliated Organization wishes to become a member of an Organization Member, that Organization Member must require that the Organization comply with section 2 of this policy, either by registering every Participant in that Organization with that Organization Member or by providing reasonable proof (including, for instance, a verification letter from another Organization Member of the number of players registered from that Organization) upon request that every Participant that it does not register with that Organization Member is registered with another Organization Member.

**Example |** A club with 5,500 players wishes to join an Organization Member (OM-USA). The club is not currently affiliated with any Organization Member. If the club wants to register only a portion (for instance, 1,000) of its players with OM-USA, OM-USA must reject the request unless the club either agrees to register the other 4,500 players with OM-USA as well or agrees to register these 4,500 players with another Organization Member.



If, however, the club is affiliated with another Organization Member already, and wishes to register only 1,000 players with OM-USA, the club must provide reasonable proof if requested to OM-USA of registration of the other players with the other Organization Member, and then OM-USA must allow the club to register only those 1,000 players (subject to section 4 of this policy).

#### Section 4

An Organization Member must allow Participants from any Affiliated Organization to participate in its programs if those Participants register and comply with all of the reasonable policies, rules, regulations, and requirements of the Organization Member.

- A. Each Participant (and only those Participants) that actually participate in the programs of the Organization Member must register with the Organization Member and pay any applicable registration fees.
- B. An Organization Member must allow a group of Participants from any Affiliated Organization to participate in its programs if that group of Participants complies with all reasonable policies, rules, regulations, and requirements of the Organization Member. For purposes of this section, “reasonable policies, rules, regulations, and requirements” may include but are not limited to the following:
  - 1. A requirement that the group of Participants be of a minimum size (such as having a minimum number of players, teams, or age groups);
  - 2. A requirement that the group of Participants includes a minimum percentage or number of recreational players, unless the group of Participants are already registered with another Organization Member and are directly affiliated with a group of recreational players who could satisfy this minimum requirement;
  - 3. A requirement that the group of Participants follows all team formation rules;
  - 4. A requirement that the group of Participants follows all competition rules (such as numbers of players per team, game rules, and team selection rules);
  - 5. A requirement that the group of Participants follows all licensing and certification rules (such as rules relating to referee certifications and coaching licenses);
  - 6. A requirement that the group of Participants observes rationally supportable geographic rules of the Organization Member;
  - 7. A requirement that the group of Participants be subject to all disciplinary rules of the Organization Member;
  - 8. A requirement that the group of Participants identifies a board or governing body that will handle administrative issues and be responsible for compliance with applicable Organization Member rules (but the Organization Member may not mandate that the group of Participants form a new corporation or entity, or identify a different board or governing body than the one already running the Affiliated Organization); and
  - 9. A requirement that the group of Participants meets standards of financial accountability and transparency as well as any insurance and risk management standards.
- C. For purposes of this Section 4, an Organization Member must apply its requirements consistently.

#### POLICY 212-2 | MANDATORY LIABILITY INSURANCE

All Organization Members that register amateur players shall obtain a Comprehensive General Liability Policy (“Policy”) not less than one million dollar per claim/two million dollar aggregate. The Policy shall provide general liability insurance coverage for the Organization Member, its leagues, clubs, teams, registered players and staff. The Policy shall name the Federation as an additional insured and shall have



the flexibility to allow other entities including owners and lessors of premises, sponsors and co-promoters, coaches, officials, and volunteers while acting in their roles of supporting the Organization Member to be named as additional insured. The Organization Members shall comply with this Policy the sooner of the Organization Member's next fiscal year or January 1, 2015, if they do not have any current general liability insurance. If an Organization Member has a current Policy that does not meet the criteria in this Policy, it shall comply with this policy within sixty days of the next renewal date of the current Policy but no later than within twelve months after this Policy is adopted. Every Organization Member must submit to the Federation a certificate of insurance evidencing compliance with this policy annually.

### **POLICY 212-3 | U.S. SOCCER ATHLETE AND PARTICIPANT SAFETY POLICY - STANDARDS FOR ORGANIZATION MEMBERS**

**Policy Statement** | Each Organization Member of U.S. Soccer must maintain, as part of its risk management program, an athlete and participant safety program that includes the six components listed below.

1. **Prohibited Conduct Policy** | Organization Members must implement and enforce, at a minimum, U.S. Soccer's Model Prohibited Conduct Policy, incorporated herein by reference, which prohibits misconduct including bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, and sexual misconduct, as those terms are defined by the U.S. Center for SafeSport's SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements (the "**SafeSport Code**"). The SafeSport Code is available at: <https://www.safesport.org/policies-procedures>.

Organization Members must apply, at a minimum, the Model Prohibited Conduct Policy to all activities under the Organization Member's jurisdiction and at least to (1) Organization Member employees and board members; (2) the members of such Organization Member; (3) athletes who are minors or referees who are minors (collectively, "**Minor Athletes**"); and (4) **any** adult individuals the Organization Member authorizes, approves or appoints to have Regular Contact (as defined in the U.S. Soccer Model Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy ("Model MAAPP"), incorporated herein by reference) with or authority over Minor Athletes (collectively, "**Adult Participants**"). This policy must also prohibit retaliation against individuals making good faith reports of misconduct.

2. **Appropriate Background Screening** | All Organization Members with Minor Athletes must implement and enforce a policy that requires appropriate background screening of at least adult individuals authorized to have Regular Contact with or authority over Minor Athletes by the earlier of 1) prior to Regular Contact with a Minor Athlete; or 2) within the first 45 days of the individual taking on the role giving them access to Minor Athletes.

At a minimum, the policy should include screening against applicable sex offender registries in the relevant state and a check against the Amateur Organization Member's suspension database, U.S. Soccer's disqualification list, and the SafeSport disciplinary records available at: [www.safesport.org](http://www.safesport.org). *(Please note that many, if not all, of these references and resources for background screening are publicly available at no cost.)*

An Organization Member may decide that its background check requirements will not apply to certain or all people under 18 years of age, provided that it clearly publishes that fact in its policy documentation.

3. **Education and Training** | Organization Members must implement and enforce a policy (1) requiring education and training designed to meet the Organization Member's obligations under the this Policy,





the SafeSport Act, and the U.S. Soccer Model MAAPP for (a) Organization Member employees and board members and (b) Adult Participants who have Regular Contact with or authority over Minor Athletes, in each case as a condition to participation, (2) subject to parental consent, offer and provide training to Minor Athletes and (3) offer training to parents of Minor Athletes. The Policy should require the following:

- A. **Initial Training for Adults** | Core Center for SafeSport Training | The following Adult Participants must complete the SafeSport Trained Core either through the Center's online training or the Center's approved, in-person training:
- i. Adult Participants who have Regular Contact with any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor;
  - ii. Adult Participants who have authority over any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor;
  - iii. Adult Participants who are employees or board members of an Organization Member.

Adult Participants who are medical providers required to take training under Section (a) can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the SafeSport Trained Core.

These policies must require Adult Participants to complete the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Core SafeSport Training (i.e., the Center's online training or the Center's approved in-person training), and as applicable, follow-up refresher course training, with any new Adult Participants to receive initial training upon the earlier of:

- Before Regular Contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor begins, and
- Within the first 45 days of either initial membership or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this policy.

Each Organization Member must track whether its Adult Participants have completed the training required by Section 3.

- B. **Refresher Course(s) for Adults** | The above listed Adult Participants must complete a refresher course on an annual basis, beginning the calendar year after completing the SafeSport Trained Core. Every four years, Adult Participants will complete the SafeSport Trained Core training. Adult Participants who are medical providers can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the SafeSport Trained Core and are required to take the refresher courses on an annual basis.
- C. **Training for Minor Athletes** | Organization Members with Minor Athletes must – subject to parental consent – offer and provide the U.S. Center for SafeSport's minor athlete training regarding the prevention of child abuse to any Minor Athletes on an annual basis. The Center's minor athlete training can be found at <https://safesporttrained.org/#/public-dashboard>. Organization Members with Minor Athletes must track:
- i. A description of the training(s);
  - ii. The date the training(s) was offered and given, and
  - iii. A description of how the training(s) was offered and given.
- D. **Training for Parents** | Organization Members with Minor Athletes must offer and provide the U.S. Center for SafeSport's parent training to parents of Minor Athletes on an annual basis. The U.S. Center for SafeSport's parent course is located at <https://safesporttrained.org/#/public-dashboard>.
4. **Reporting** | Organization Members must maintain a procedure for reporting misconduct, including violation of the SafeSport Code or the U.S. Soccer Model MAAPP, to the Organization Member and, to





the extent required by the SafeSport Act, mandate reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities and/or the U.S. Center for SafeSport. The procedure should be clear that reporting may be made anonymously, and that no direct fees or other cost is involved in making a report. Each Organization Member must also maintain a policy prohibiting retaliation against individuals making good faith reports of misconduct.

5. **Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy** | All Organization Members are required to adopt the U.S. Soccer Model Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy ("MAAPP"), which includes the Education and Training requirement set forth in Section 3 of this policy, as well the following required abuse prevention policies:
  - i. One-on-One Interactions, including meetings and individual training sessions
  - ii. Athletic training modalities, massages and rubdowns
  - iii. Locker rooms and changing areas
  - iv. Electronic communications
  - v. Transportation and Lodging
- A. **Minor Athletes who become adult athletes** | All athletes turning 18 who still meet the threshold for Regular Contact or authority must complete the SafeSport Core training, and must comply with the MAAPP, including its abuse prevention policies, absent the Close-In-Age exception which may apply to the enforcement of abuse prevention policies ~~only~~, but not to the Education and Training requirement set forth in Section 3 of this policy and the MAAPP.
- B. **Implementation** | The U.S. Center for SafeSport's MAAPP sets a minimum standard for compliance. In implementing the MAAPP, Organization Members may choose to implement a policy that is stricter than the MAAPP.
6. **Enforcement**
  - A. **By Organization Members** | Each Organization Member must enforce its Prohibited Conduct Policy and MAAPP. Specifically, violations of the policy must be subject to an appropriate grievance process that is materially free of bias and conflicts of interest, to address allegations of misconduct following the report or complaint of misconduct. This grievance process must include the opportunity for review by a disinterested individual or body and a right to appeal a final decision rendered by an Organization Member's process pursuant to U.S. Soccer Bylaw 704.
  - B. **By U.S. Soccer** | Pursuant to Bylaw 212, U.S. Soccer reserves the right to, either directly or through a contracted third-party service provider, survey, audit, require certifications of compliance with, and otherwise review compliance by its Organization Members with this policy. Failure of any Organization Member to issue and implement the policies required by this Policy 212-3 will constitute a violation of Bylaw 212 Section 1.



## POLICY 214-1 | MEMBERSHIP DUES DEADLINES

All Members shall pay annual membership dues to the Federation as follows:

AFFILIATION	DATE DUE
Associate	On or before June 1 of each Federation Fiscal Year
Indoor Professional League	30 days prior to the start of a new season during League: the Federation Fiscal Year
National Affiliate	On or before June 1 of each Federation Fiscal Year; fees based upon the registration of individuals and/or teams shall be paid in on a monthly basis as those individuals and/or teams are registered.
National Association	On or before June 1 of each Federation Fiscal Year; fees based upon the registration of individuals and/or teams shall be paid in on a monthly basis as those individuals and/or teams are registered.
National Member	On or before June 1 of each Federation Fiscal Year; fees based upon the registration of individuals and/or teams shall be paid in on a monthly basis as those individuals and/or teams are registered.
Other Affiliate	On or before June 1 of each Federation Fiscal Year; fees based upon the registration of individuals and/or teams shall be paid in on a monthly basis as those individuals and/or teams are registered.
Professional Leagues	30 days prior to the start of a new season during League: the Federation Fiscal Year
State Association	On or before June 1 of each Federation Fiscal Year; fees based upon the registration of individuals and/or teams shall be paid in on a monthly basis as those individuals and/or teams are registered.

For purposes of calculating an annual census, registrations shall be counted for the twelve-month period ended as of December 31.



## POLICY 214-2 | MEMBERSHIP FEES - (ALL FIGURES IN UNITED STATES DOLLARS (\$))

SECTION	AFFILIATION	ORGANIZATIONAL FEE	PLAYER / TEAM FEES
<b>Section 1</b>	Associate Members	\$1,000	
<b>Section 2</b>	Disabled Service Organization Player Fee	\$500	\$1 per player over 500 registered players (maximum fee of \$1,000)
<b>Section 3</b>	Indoor Professional League Members	\$40,000 League Fee for up to 10 teams	Team Fee for each team over 10 - \$2,000
<b>Section 4</b>	National Affiliate	\$10,000 (\$1,000 for Organizations Members that only register active-duty U.S. military personnel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>Adult Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>U-20 League Player Fee \$1 per player</li> </ul>
<b>Section 5</b>	National Association*	\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>Adult Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>U-20 League Player Fee \$1 per player</li> </ul> <p>(*per player fees are paid only for players that have not been registered directly with the Federation by a State Association Member)</p>
<b>Section 6</b>	National Member	\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>Adult Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>U-20 League Player Fee \$1 per player</li> </ul>
<b>Section 7</b>	Other Affiliate	\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>Adult Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>U-20 League Player Fee \$1 per player</li> </ul>
<b>Section 8 (A)</b>	<b>Division I</b> League Fees	League Fee for up to 10 teams	\$350,000
		Team Fee for each team over 10	\$30,000
		Team Fee for Player Registration	\$2,000



Section 8 (B)	Division II League Fees	League Fee	\$106,667
		Team Fee for Player Registration	\$1,333
Section 8 (C)	Division III League Fees	League Fee	\$73,150
		Team Fee for Player Registration	\$1,333
Section 9	State Association registering players through another Organization Member	\$0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>Adult Player Fee \$1 per player</li> </ul>
Section 10	State Association not registering players through another Organization Member Organizational Fee	\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Player Fee \$1 per player</li> <li>Adult Player Fee \$1 per player</li> </ul>
Section 11	Professional Player Fee for Non-Professional League Members	Professional Player Registration Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$50 (per year of the contract)</li> <li>\$10 per contract year to be returned to the Organization Member that registers the player with the Federation and \$10 per contract year to be returned to State Association in which team is registered; up to a maximum amount of \$1,333 per team in a calendar year)</li> </ul>
		Professional Player Transfer Fee	\$20
		Professional Player Release Fee	\$10
		Professional Player Loan Fee	\$20
		Professional Player Loan Termination Fee	\$10
		Professional Player Amateur Reinstatement Fee	\$50



## POLICY 231-1 | NOMINATION PROCEDURE FOR LIFE MEMBERS

### Section 1 | Nomination Process

Any nomination for the awarding of a Life Membership pursuant to Bylaw 231 shall submit such nomination on a form made available by the Federation. This form shall require the following information:

- A. A statement about the positions the nominee has served in the Federation, including officer, Board of Directors, committee, and staff and team positions and the years that the nominee has served in those positions.
- B. A short description of how the nominee has contributed to the Federation's mission and goals to grow the sport of soccer and enhance the national teams' competitive status in international competitions.
- C. An attachment including three letters of recommendation, each addressing how the nominee has contributed to the Federation's mission and goals.

If a nomination is not complete before the deadline set forth in Bylaw 231, it shall be returned to the person who submitted the nomination for resubmission and shall not otherwise be reviewed or considered.

### Section 2 | Review and Consideration of Nominations

- A. The Nominating ~~& and~~ Governance Committee shall review all completed nominations and may make a recommendation to the Board of Directors as to whether any nominee(s) should be granted Life Member status.
- B. The Board of Directors shall review the Nominating & Governance Committee recommendation and shall decide by majority vote whether the nominees shall be granted Life Membership in the Federation.
- C. The decision of the Board to nominate Life Member(s), if any, shall be distributed to the National Council at least 30 days prior to the National Council annual general meeting.

## POLICY 241-1 | RECOGNITION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

### Section 1

- A. Section 3 of Bylaw 241 of the United States Soccer Federation provides for the recognition of suspensions and other disciplinary actions imposed on persons by the Federation and Members of the Federation if certain requirements are satisfied. This policy prescribes procedures regarding those requirements for recognition, including notification to Members about those persons.
- B. In this policy:
  1. "Federation" means the United States Soccer Federation.
  2. "disciplinary action" means a suspension or any other disciplinary action.

### Section 2

A disciplinary action imposed by the Federation shall be recognized by all Members of the Federation on notification by the Federation as provided by section 4 of this policy.

### Section 3

- A. A disciplinary action imposed by a Member of the Federation shall be recognized by the Federation and all Members of the Federation on compliance with the following requirements:
  1. The Member must file with the Federation:
    - a. a separate request for each recognition for disciplinary action taken,
    - b. a written decision imposing the disciplinary action and the specific disciplinary action imposed, and



- c. identifying information about the person against whom the disciplinary action was taken (including name, last known address, phone number, and email address if any).
2. The Member must provide to the Federation written information (that may be included in the decision imposing the disciplinary action) that the person on whom the disciplinary action was imposed received a hearing (or declined a hearing) and procedural rights substantially similar to those requirements in Federation Bylaw 701.
- B. The Federation shall review the materials submitted as provided under subsection (A) of this section to determine if the person against whom the disciplinary action was taken received hearing and procedural rights substantially similar to the requirements of Federation Bylaw 701. If the person against the disciplinary action was imposed had an opportunity for a hearing before the disciplinary action was imposed, could have appealed the disciplinary action imposed under Federation Bylaw 705, and the time for appealing the decision has expired or the decision was appealed and affirmed on appeal, the Federation shall hold that it has determined that the person did receive those hearing and procedural rights.
- C. If the Federation determines under subsection (b) of this section that a person has received hearing and procedural rights, the disciplinary action shall be recognized by the Federation and all Members of the Federation on notification by the Federation as provided by section 4 of this policy.

#### Section 4

The Federation shall distribute at least once each month to every Member of the Federation a disciplinary action report that is a list of all persons against whom disciplinary actions have been imposed that are recognized. The Federation and each Member of the Federation are required to recognize those disciplinary actions. The list shall include sufficient identifying information about each of the persons on the list.

### **POLICY 401-1 | USSF NOMINATION AND CAMPAIGN PROCESS FOR USSF PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT**

#### Section 1 | Eligibility

Candidates for the office of President or Vice President of the Federation must meet the following requirements to be eligible:

- A. Nomination and Support.
  1. The candidate must be proposed by either (i) an Organization Member or (ii) an Athlete member of the Board of Directors ("Athlete Director"). This proposal will be considered a declaration of support. The candidate also must be supported by declarations of support from at least two (2) additional Organization Members and/or Athlete Directors. A candidate proposal or declaration of support does not commit the Organization Member or Athlete Director to vote for such candidate. The deadline for proposing candidates is 60 days before the annual general meeting at which the National Council will conduct the election.
  2. An Organization Member's proposal of a candidate or declaration of support must be in writing, on letterhead of the Organization Member, signed by an officer, director, or senior executive of the Organization Member and submitted directly to the liaison for the Nominating and Governance Committee by the Organization Member. An Athlete Director's proposal of a candidate or declaration of support must be in writing, signed by the Athlete Director and submitted directly to the liaison for the Nominating and Governance Committee by the Athlete Director.
  3. An Organization Member or Athlete Director (each a "Declared Supporter") may not propose or submit a declaration of support for more than one individual for the same position at the same time. Before submitting another candidate proposal or declaration of support for the same



position, a Declared Supporter must withdraw, in writing, any previously submitted candidate proposal or declaration of support. Once the Nominating and Governance Committee has announced the candidature of a candidate in accordance with Section 2(e) below, a Declared Supporter may not withdraw a letter of support/nomination. If a potential candidate publicly declares that the potential candidate declines to seek office prior to the deadline specified in the Federation Bylaws, any declaration of support already submitted for that declining candidate will be deemed withdrawn, and the Declared Supporters for the declining candidate may choose to propose, or submit a declaration of support for, another candidate, provided the Declared Supporter can do so by the deadline noted in Section 1(a)(1), above. If a candidate proposal or declaration of support is received for more than one candidate from the same Declared Supporter, all declarations from that Declared Supporter will be considered invalid.

**B. Background Check and Conflicts Disclosures.**

1. the candidate must submit to and pass a background check to be completed by the vendor selected by the Nominating and Governance Committee; and,
2. the candidate must complete a conflict of interest disclosure form in compliance with the Federation's Policy Concerning Conflicts of Interest and Business Ethics, which must be submitted to the Nominating and Governance Committee.

## **Section 2 | Submission of Candidatures**

- A. Candidates either directly or through Organization Members must notify the USSF CEO/Secretary General, in writing, of candidature for the office of USSF President or Vice-President no later than sixty (60) days before the National Council Meeting as provided in Bylaw 401. The notification must include an initial conflict(s) of interest disclosure form required by Section 1(b)(2), above, which disclosure must be supplemented as provided in Section 2(d) below.
- B. The USSF CEO/Secretary General shall forward all candidatures without any undue delay to the Nominating and Governance Committee for examination and for passing a decision on admission of the candidate.
- C. Upon receipt of the proposed candidature, the Nominating and Governance Committee shall require the proposed candidates to complete a background check authorization form. The Nominating and Governance Committee will complete the background check within thirty (30) days of receiving the authorization form. Should the candidate submit the authorization form more than six months before the Annual General Meeting, the Committee will repeat the background check within thirty (30) days of the National Council Meeting.
- D. Each Candidate will be required to supplement their conflict of interest disclosure form, consistent with the Federation's Policy Concerning Conflicts of Interest and Business Ethics, no later than thirty (30) days prior to the National Council Meeting and again no later than three (3) days prior to the National Council Meeting. The disclosures on these forms will be made public on the page dedicated to the election at [www.ussoccer.com](http://www.ussoccer.com). In addition, any candidate who is elected remains obligated to supplement his or her disclosure to the RAC Committee promptly following his or her election.
- E. The Nominating and Governance Committee shall announce each candidature upon review of the background check and accompanying paperwork to confirm compliance with the Federation Bylaws and this Policy.

## **Section 3 | Campaign**

- A. **Campaign Conduct** | Candidates shall conduct campaigns with dignity and moderation and with respect for any other candidate(s), for the Federation and its Organization Members. In conducting the campaign, all candidates shall comply with the Bylaws and Policies of the Federation, including without limitation the Policy Concerning Conflicts of Interest and Business



Ethics, and all applicable law.

- B. **Delegate Lists** | The Nominating and Governance Committee shall oversee the creation of a list of registered delegates, which list will be made available to all requesting candidates, who have been announced as a candidate by the Nominating and Governance Committee, have executed and returned an appropriate release and indemnity agreement in favor of Federation, and agree to use the delegate list information solely for the Federation campaign and no other purpose. The Nominating and Governance Committee will make the delegates list available to such candidates starting not more than one hundred twenty (120) days before the National Council meeting and will provide updated lists of registered delegates to such candidates sixty (60) and thirty (30) days before the National Council Meeting.
- C. **Campaign Finance Disclosures** | In compliance with the Federation's Policy Concerning Conflicts of Interest and Business Ethics, all candidates must disclose to the Nominating and Governance Committee any financing or donations in excess of \$50 that they receive from any third party, individual, entity, Organization Member or otherwise, and the identity of the donor. The limit of \$50 shall also apply to in-kind donations. If a candidate decides to utilize crowd funding to support his or her campaign, the candidate shall be responsible for identifying and disclosing all donors who donate more than \$50. The Nominating and Governance Committee will provide a disclosure form to the candidates and will make these disclosures available to the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee pursuant to Federation policy. The disclosures on these forms will be made public on the page dedicated to the election at [www.ussoccer.com](http://www.ussoccer.com).
- D. **Candidate Compliance** | A candidate's failure to comply with these requirements may result in a candidate being declared ineligible or subject to other disciplinary actions as determined by the Independent Ethics Committee.

#### **POLICY 411-1 | FEDERATION RESPONSIBILITY**

No officer, employee or agent of this Federation shall, nor shall they have the authority to, make or execute any contracts or agreements of any nature if said contract or agreement causes or may cause this Federation to be obligated to expenditures or other obligations the sum of which exceeds Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) for any fiscal year, or if the obligation has a term or establishes an obligation extending beyond one year, then the sum of which exceeds Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) over the life of the obligation, unless and until said contract or agreement has been approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at a duly called meeting of the Board of Directors. Notwithstanding this policy, the Secretary General shall have the authority to sign agreements for the day to day operations of the Federation such as agreements with stadia, hotels, other FIFA National Associations, vendors and independent contractors, notwithstanding the amount of obligation, provided that such agreements may not exceed three (3) years.

#### **POLICY 411-2 | SAFE SOCCER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Board of Directors shall ensure that athlete safety rules, policies, and procedures comply with the requirements of the USOPC and U.S. Center for SafeSport.

#### **POLICY 414-1 | ENGAGEMENT WITH ORGANIZATION MEMBERS**

##### **Section 1 | Schedule of Meetings**

The Federation will publish annually on its website a tentative list of quarterly, scheduled in-person, Board meetings for the next year. The Federation shall update the meeting information on the website to include the dates, times and locations as that information becomes available.





## **Section 2 | Open Meetings**

Regularly scheduled, in-person meetings of the Board are open to Federation members to attend in-person. An attendee may only participate in a meeting as authorized by the Board. Nothing herein shall limit the Board's ability to meet in executive session as it deems appropriate under the circumstances.

## **Section 3 | Draft Board Agenda**

The Federation will post to its website a draft Board agenda prior to each quarterly, scheduled in-person, Board meeting. The draft agenda will include open session (i.e., non-executive session) business items on the agenda.

## **Section 4 | Minutes**

For each motion approved in open session by the Board or a Federation Standing Committee, the minutes shall include the text of the:

- Policy;
- Competition Rule;
- Resolution;
- Bylaw recommendation; and/or
- Budget or budget revision

as approved in the motion. The minutes of the Board and Open Cup and Referee Committees shall be posted to the website of the U.S. Soccer Federation after they have been approved by the Board or the respective Committee.

## **POLICY 431-1 | FEDERATION COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1 | Appeals Committee (21 to 72 members)**

See Policy 705-1. In addition, where a request has been made to enforce a suspension under USSF Bylaw 241, the Appeals Committee shall determine whether a suspended party received hearing and procedural rights sufficient to enforce that party's suspension under USSF Bylaw 241, Section 4.

### **Section 2 | Budget and Finance Committee of the Board (3 to 6 members)**

The Budget and Finance Committee is responsible for:

- reviewing the Federation's annual budget as prepared by the Secretary General to ensure that the revenue and expense assumptions included in the budget are fair and consistent with the Federation's business plan.
- presenting the Federation's annual budget to the Board of Directors and National Council for approval.
- reviewing amendments to the Federation's annual budget.
- ensuring the adequacy of the Federation's internal financial controls and ensuring that the Federation's accounting and reporting practices meet all applicable requirements.

*NOTE: For Budget Amendments generally, See Policy 511-1*

### **Section 3 | Credentials Committee (5 to 10 members)**

The Credentials Committee shall be responsible for:

- establishing a uniform procedure for submitting and certifying votes.
- reporting on the eligibility of representatives to the National Council with its recommendations.
- ensuring that the Council Meeting seating arrangements for delegates and voting procedures are prepared in advance.
- recording and checking the authenticity of votes cast at the National Council Meetings.



#### **Section 4 | Physical Fitness, Sports Medicine, and Research Committee (3 to 30 members)**

The Physical Fitness, Sports Medicine, and Research Committee shall have the responsibilities as outlined in its charter approved by the Board of Directors.

#### **Section 5 | Referee Committee (5 to 15 members)**

The Referee Committee shall be responsible for:

- advising the Board on bylaws and policies concerning the National Referee Development Program.
- proposing and reviewing changes to the structure of the National Referee Development Program.
- reviewing the qualification requirements for each referee grade.
- reviewing the training curriculum.
- advising the Board with respect to the removal of state referee administrators.
- recommending to the Board a list of referees and assistant referees to the international list as required by FIFA.

#### **Section 6 | Rules Committee (3 to 10 members)**

The Rules Committee shall be responsible for:

- reviewing all proposals involving any amendments to the Bylaws and Policies and give due and careful consideration to same before submitting said proposals to the National Council with their recommendations.
- examining all applications for membership in the Federation and making recommendations to the Board of Directors and National Council, and ~~also~~ ensuring that all rules and bylaws of submitting organizations abide by the Bylaws and Policies of the Federation and conform to the spirit and intent of Chapter 2205 of Title 36 of the United States Code and Bylaws 213 and 802.
- reviewing proposed policies and procedures, and amendments to those policies and procedures, before adoption by the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, or the National Council, as the case may be, to determine their consistency with the Bylaws of the Federation and to make a report on its review with comments and recommendations it considers appropriate.
- providing advisory opinions, interpreting the Bylaws of the Federation on request of the National Council or the Board of Directors or on receiving a written request from a member of the Federation, a member of the Board of Directors, the Secretary General, or a committee of the Federation requesting an interpretation.

#### **Section 7 | Disability Soccer Committee (3 to 15 members)**

The soccer for the challenged player committee shall be responsible for developing ways to promote, develop and facilitate opportunities in all aspects of the game for players with physical, sensory and cognitive impairments.

#### **Section 8 | Independent Ethics Committee (3 members)**

The Independent Ethics Committee shall have the responsibilities as outlined in its charter approved by the Board of Directors.

#### **Section 9 | Technical Committee of the Board (3 to 6 members)**

The Technical Committee shall be responsible for:

- Developing, recommending and supporting initiatives in four (4) key areas:
  - *Player Identification* | the evaluation of players to determine the most appropriate level of competition. Suggest modifications or alternative models to enhance the selection process.
  - *Player Development* | the evaluation of training programs and playing opportunities from the grassroots to the National Teams program.



- *Coaching Education* | demonstrate leadership in providing coaches with the necessary educational tools to achieve excellence within their chosen level.
- *National Training Center* | develop operating guidelines for the National Training Center to enhance the growth and success of the National Teams, Coaching Education and Referee programs.
- Working with all member organizations to ensure that a broad range of resources is used to elevate all technical aspects of the sport.

#### **Section 10 | General Committee Obligations.**

Upon appointment each year, each standing committee shall establish its goals for the year including measurable objectives and a timeline for accomplishing those goals. Each committee shall submit its written goals to the Board for the Board's first regular meeting after the committee has been appointed. Each committee shall then submit a written status report to the Board for each Board meeting thereafter. In addition, 45 days prior to the Annual General Meeting, each committee shall submit to the Secretary General a written annual report detailing the committee's actions in satisfaction of its goals and objectives for the year.

#### **Section 11 | Term Limits**

Except for a 10 Year Athlete, no member of a standing committee may serve more than 16 years on the same standing committee after January 1, 2023.

#### **Section 12 | Attendance**

A standing committee member will be removed by the President for failing to attend more than one half of the regular meetings of the standing committee during any 12-month period, unless they are able to demonstrate to the President the presence of exigent circumstances caused and excused the absences.

#### **Section 13 | Removal**

For the avoidance of doubt, a standing committee member or a board committee member may be removed by the President, subject to approval of the Board.

### **POLICY 501-1 | REMOVAL OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

For the avoidance of doubt, the Secretary General may be removed by the President, subject to approval of the Board.

### **POLICY 502-1 | AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY GENERAL TO FINE**

The Board of Directors delegates its authority to the Secretary General to fine up to \$10,000 under section 2 of Bylaw 241. A party fined by the Secretary General may appeal to the three national officers of the Federation any such fine. If not satisfied with the decision of the officers, the party may further appeal to the Board of Directors.

### **POLICY 511-1 | FEDERATION BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

#### **Section 1 | General**

Conditions change that make assumptions used in the development of any budget invalid. A budget that is not changeable becomes a meaningless tool. Any of the following conditions could develop during a budget period:

1. A projected shortfall of budgeted funds.
2. A projected unused funding due to cancellation of programs or operation efficiencies.
3. Continued existence of identified but non-funded programs that are highly desirable and necessary.
4. Identification of new program requirements.
5. Unanticipated funding becomes reality (in hand).



There is, therefore, a requirement for methodology to effectively and consistently deal with all budget program changes. The following procedure has been designed to provide the necessary program control.

## **Section 2 | Budget Amendment Procedure**

- A. Identification of Condition
  - 1. Documented description of all relevant information
  - 2. Requirement justification using the Zero-Base Budget methodology
- B. Submission of Request Package
  - 1. To the Budget Director for coordination and technical review
  - 2. To the Budget Committee for review and evaluation
- C. Approval or Rejection Criteria
  - 1. Based on the availability of funds
- D. Recommendation for Action
  - 1. By the Budget Committee through the Budget Director
  - 2. To the Executive Committee in the absence of the National Board of Directors
  - 3. To the National Board of Directors for approval or confirmation of Executive Committee action

## **POLICY 521-1 | INTERNATIONAL GAMES**

### **Section 1**

The Secretary General promptly shall review requests by an Organization Member, a Club, or FIFA Match Agent

- A. to hold international soccer competitions in the United States or
- B. to sponsor United States athletes to participate in international soccer competitions outside the United States. The Secretary General shall ensure compliance with the Federation's obligations as a national governing body under the Amateur Sports Act and as a national association member of FIFA. Pursuant to FIFA requirements, any person wishing to arrange international soccer competitions must be a licensed FIFA Match Agent. The Secretary General shall grant such sanction unless it is decided by clear and convincing evidence that holding or sponsoring the international soccer competition would be detrimental to the best interest of the sport.

### **Section 2**

The Secretary General shall establish procedures for sanctioning an organization (other than the Federation) or person to hold an international soccer competition in the United States or to sponsor United States athletes to compete in international soccer competition outside the United States, which shall include:

- A. a reasonable and non-discriminatory sanctioning fee;
- B. standards for promoters of international soccer competitions that include, at a minimum, the following requirements:
  - 1. audited or notarized financial reports for similar events in the United States, if any, conducted by the organization or person;
  - 2. documentation and reports of the most recent trips to a foreign country, if any, that the organization or person sponsored for the purpose of having United States athletes compete in international soccer competitions; and,
  - 3. documentation from the appropriate entity that will hold the international soccer competition outside the United States certifying that all the Federation's requirements with respect to such competitions will be met;
- C. appropriate measures to protect the playing status of athletes who will take part in the competition and to protect their eligibility to compete in athletic competitions;



- D. appropriate provisions for validation of any records established during the competition;
- E. appropriate measures to ensure that there is due regard for any international requirements specifically applicable to the competition;
- F. appropriate measures to ensure that the competition is conducted by qualified game officials;
- G. appropriate measures to ensure that there is proper medical supervision for the athletes who will participate in the competition;
- H. appropriate measures to ensure that there is proper safety precautions to protect the personal welfare of the athletes and spectators at the competition; and,
- I. all other measures deemed necessary for the Federation to fulfill its obligations as a national governing body and as a national association member of FIFA.

### Section 3

For international soccer competitions played in the United States involving at least one national team or promoted by the Federation, the Federation shall not pay any fees to the local State Association members.

### Section 4

For international soccer competitions not included in Section 3 above:

- A. The Federation will collect and hold for annual distribution an amount equal to 2.5% of gross ticket sales for international soccer competitions that include at least one foreign club team. The proceeds will be divided between National Associations, National Affiliates, Other Affiliates, and State Associations who register adult and youth amateur players.
- B. Games eligible for distribution each year must meet two conditions:
  - 1. The international soccer competition is played in that calendar year; and
  - 2. The proceeds are collected by the Federation by March 31 of the following year
- C. The amount eligible for distribution will be capped annually at \$2.1 million. Any proceeds collected beyond \$2.1 million will be retained by the Federation for programming that:
  - 1. Benefits membership (e.g., referees, coaching education); and
  - 2. Is usage approved by the Federation's Budget & Finance Committee
- D. Any uncollected funds from prior year(s) will carry over and will not be subject to the annual cap.
- E. Distributions will be made to eligible Organization Members on July 1 of each year.
- F. Organization Member eligibility will be based on membership in good standing and compliance with player registration rules and procedures. This will include the Federation Treasurer's annual certification of player registrations prior to each Annual General Meeting.
- G. Distribution of funds to members will be calculated as follows:
  - 1. Values associated with each eligible Organization Member, except Disabled Service Organizations, will be established based on the annual player registration fees paid to the Federation by each Organization Member in the prior calendar year.
  - 2. A median value from the calculation in (i) will be assigned to each eligible Disabled Service Organization.
  - 3. The assigned value for each Disabled Service Organization will be added to the sum total of the values associated with all other eligible Organization Members.
  - 4. The proportional share for each eligible Organization Member, including Disabled Service Organizations, will be calculated based on the portion of the sum total established in (iii).
- H. The Federation's Budget & Finance Committee will review and approve the calculation prior to distribution each year.



## **Section 5 | Participation in Competitions in Other Territories**

The Federation is only authorized to organize and coordinate competitions held within the United States. No Organization Member, league, club, or team may participate in a competition outside of the United States without the authorization and approval of the Federation and FIFA and/or Concacaf.



## **POLICY 521-2 | DISCRIMINATORY CONDUCT AT INTERNATIONAL MATCHES**

### **Section 1**

Discriminatory chants are strictly prohibited. For purposes of this policy, a “discriminatory chant” shall include any derogatory chant relative to race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender, or other chant deemed to otherwise violate the human rights of any participant or spectator at the match. Discriminatory chants are large scale in-stadium chants. Any issues between a small number of fans should be addressed pursuant to an appropriate fan code of conduct and stadium security protocols.

### **Section 2**

As part of the sanctioning process to hold an International Match in the United States, the promoter and/or FIFA Match Agent promoting an International Match shall agree to be responsible for implementing actions to prohibit, prevent and eliminate discriminatory chants at the matches they promote in the United States. Specifically, the promoter/FIFA Match Agent shall cause the then current protocols promulgated by FIFA/Concacaf/U.S. Soccer to end such chants to be widely disseminated in connection with such matches and implemented at such matches as needed to prevent and eliminate discriminatory chants. Failure to implement the protocols shall subject the promoter/FIFA Match Agent to disciplinary action including liquidated damages, financial penalties and hosting bans as more fully set forth below.

### **Section 3**

- A. As part of the sanctioning process to hold an International Match, the promoter/FIFA Match Agent shall post a bond equal to the lesser of 10% of the anticipated paid gate for such match or \$1,000,000 to be held as a performance bond to ensure that the protocols are applied. U.S. Soccer will determine the bond amount.
- B. If discriminatory chants occur at the International Match and the promoter has not fully applied the protocols to stop the discriminatory chant, then the promoter/FIFA Match Agent shall forfeit the performance bond as liquidated damages. U.S. Soccer shall use the liquidated damages to promote approved DEIB initiatives and victim rights.
- C. In addition to the liquidated damages provisions above, U.S. Soccer will not grant sanction to the promoter/FIFA Match Agent to host an International Match in the United States for a period of 2 years after the first violation of this provision. After a second violation, U.S. Soccer will not grant sanction to the promoter/FIFA Match Agent to host an International Match in the United States for a period of 5 years thereafter. If the promoter/FIFA Match Agent is found to have committed a third violation, the promoter/FIFA Match Agent shall be permanently banned from hosting an International Match in the United States.

### **Section 4**

- A. As part of the sanctioning process, each team seeking to participate in an International Match in the United States shall agree in writing that it will assist the promoter/FIFA Match Agent in ensuring that discriminatory chants do not occur at a match involving that team and that it will cooperate in instituting the protocols should a discriminatory chant occur. The teams shall further agree that if the supporters for their team engage in a discriminatory chant at an International Match in the United States, then that team will not be permitted to play an International Match in the United States for a period of 2 years. A second violation shall result in a 5-year ban from playing an International Match in the United States. A third violation shall result in a permanent ban from playing an International Match in the United States.



## Section 5

Any ticket holder the International Match may enforce this provision by initiating a grievance with U.S. Soccer pursuant to the expedited grievance procedures promulgated by US Soccer. Video evidence may be submitted to demonstrate the occurrences of discriminatory chants at an International Match.

## POLICY 531-1 | REFEREE ADMINISTRATION

### Section 1 | State Referee Administrator

The State Referee Administrator (SRA) shall be jointly appointed by the Adult and Youth State Associations within the State. (A mutually acceptable nominee will be selected by the Referee Committee and the Board of Directors when the State Associations cannot agree.) The SRA shall be appointed for a specified two (2) year term and may be reappointed. An interim SRA may be appointed, as provided in this section, to fill a vacancy during the specified two (2) year term.

The SRA shall work in cooperation with the State Referee Committee in implementing and administering all Federation programs for officials, instructors, assignors, and assessors within the State that they are registered and shall serve as liaison between the State Associations. The SRA may be a member of the State Board or Executive Committee, but shall not be the President or Chief Officer of the State Association.

### Section 2 | State Youth Referee Administrator

State Youth Referee Administrator (SYRA) shall be appointed by the Youth State Association after consultation with the SRA. The SYRA shall be appointed for a specified (2) two-year term. The SYRA may be reappointed. An interim SYRA may be appointed to fill a vacancy during the specified two (2) year term. At the discretion of the Youth State Association, the SYRA, or designee if there is no SYRA available, will be responsible for implementing and administering Federation programs specifically for Grade 9 Referees. The SYRA or designee will also serve as registrar for this grade level.

### Section 3 | Overseas Branch

All officials who reside, work, or do their primary refereeing outside of the United States shall register and be administered by the Federation Referee Staff in consultation with the Federation Referee Committee.

### Section 4 | State Referee Committee

The Adult and Youth State Associations within a State may jointly establish a State Referee Committee to administer the Federation Referee Program for their two (2) State Associations. If the two (2) State Associations cannot agree on establishing a State Referee Committee, the Federation Referee Committee may propose and the Board of Directors may establish such a committee after thirty (30) days' notice to the two State Associations of its intent to do so.

- I. The State Referee Committee shall consist of at least the following positions: a Chairperson, the State Referee Administrator, the State Youth Referee Administrator, the State Director of Instruction, the State Director of Assessment, the State Director of Assignment, the President or a representative of the Youth State Association, and the President or representative of the Adult State Association. The positions of Chairperson and State Referee Administrator may be combined with the joint agreement of the two State Associations





- II. Each State Referee Committee shall:
  - a. retain independent auditors to conduct either a financial review or audit each year of the financial records of the State Referee Committee;
  - b. promptly provide copies of each financial review or audit to the Federation and each of the two State Associations;
  - c. submit a semiannual report on the operations of the State Referee Committee for the prior six months, including financial statements; and
  - d. file with the Federation and each of the two State Associations copies of its governing documents and amendments to those documents.(Subsection II of this section 4 only apply to a State Referee Committee that is organized independently of, and separate from, any youth or adult State Association, or both.)
- III. The State Referee Committee shall oversee the administration of the Federation Referee Program within its respective State Association including the training, development, instruction, assignment, and assessment of referees for all forms of competition overseen by the Federation. The State Referee Committee shall develop the appropriate procedures and policies for oversight of referees, instructors, assessors, and assignors that perform their respective functions in competitions overseen by the State Associations. Such procedures and policies shall not conflict with the policies of the Federation Referee Program.
- IV. Each National Association that operates programming within a State may appoint a representative to the State Referee Committee in that jurisdiction.

## **Section 5 | Risk Management**

The Federation Referee Program registration form shall contain the following statement for referees to sign when completing the form: “I agree to participate in, and comply with, the risk management program of the Organization Member through which I am participating.”

## **Section 6 | Point of Contact**

Each National Affiliate, National Association, National Member, and Other Affiliate shall designate to the Secretary General annually a specific point of contact (e.g. Director of Game Officials, Referee Committee Chairperson, etc.), and an alternate person responsible for matters related to game officiating, with contact information for both the director and alternate director. This point of contact shall be responsible for organizational compliance with Federation policies related to referees and for compliance with the provisions of Policy 531-9 – Misconduct Towards Game Officials and Policy 531-10 – Misconduct of Game Officials. The Referee Department Staff of the Federation shall insure that such contact information is provided to each SRA to facilitate reporting of referee abuse, assault, and misconduct of game officials.

## **POLICY 531-2 | REFEREE REGISTRATION FEE**

### **Section 1 | Setting the Fee and Use of Payment by the Federation**

The registration fee for officials, instructors, assignors, and assessors shall be set by the Federation Referee Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. From the registration fee, fifty percent (50%) shall be paid to the Federation and used for the Federation Referee Program.



## **Section 2 | Fee Payments Retained and Used by State Referee Committee**

- I. The other fifty percent (50%) shall be retained by the State Referee Committee or the SRA if there is no State Referee Committee. This amount is to be expended on referee development to include but not be limited to referee recruitment, instruction, assessment, assignment, and administration.
- II. The State Referee Committee and/or the SRA shall provide for such fiscal control procedures necessary for proper fund accounting, prepare an annual budget, and prepare an annual written report of income and expenditures to the two (2) State Associations and the State Referee Committee.

## **POLICY 531-3 | REFEREE REGISTRATION CARDS**

All Federation Referee Program registration cards shall be issued by the Federation.

## **POLICY 531-4 | REFEREE UNIFORM**

The official uniform for referees shall be set forth by the Board of Directors.

## **POLICY 531-5 | REFEREE AUTHORITY**

The referee shall have the power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in all matches.

## **POLICY 531-6 | RESTRICTION ON REFEREE AS A PLAYER**

A referee, when registered as such, shall not be eligible as a player in any competition in which he or she is a game official.

## **POLICY 531-7 | FEDERATION FIFA REFEREE AND ASSISTANT REFEREE QUALIFICATIONS**

Referees and assistant referees appointed to the FIFA Panel must be United States citizens and must meet the requirements established by FIFA.

## **POLICY 531-8 | ASSIGNMENT OF GAME OFFICIALS**

### **Section 1 | Registration Required Prior to Assignment**

No one shall officiate in any match under the sanction or jurisdiction (direct or indirect) of the Federation who is not registered with the Federation for the current year, unless that person is a visiting foreign referee who has been properly accredited by his or her national association and approved by the Federation Referee Staff.

### **Section 2 | Unregistered Referee in Emergency**

If, because of unforeseen circumstances, a currently registered referee is unable to officiate or does not appear for an assigned match, a person may then be designated at match time to act as referee in the emergency for that one match.

### **Section 3 | Use of Club Linesmen**

When neutral assistant referees are not assigned or fail to appear for a match as assigned, the referee may seek the assistance of club linespersons whose duties shall be as delegated to them by the referee.

### **Section 4 | Minimum Game Requirements**

Each State Referee Committee and/or SRA, with the agreement of the two (2) State Associations is allowed to set a reasonable minimum number of games required by officials registering within its jurisdiction for Grade 6 State Referees, Grade 7 Referees, Grade 8 Referees, and/or Grade 9 Referees.



## Section 5 | Registered Assignors

No one shall assign any match under the sanction or jurisdiction of the Federation who is not registered as an assignor with the Federation for the current year. A State Association, league, tournament, or event may appoint an unregistered assignor in an emergency who may not serve past the end of the current fiscal year without becoming registered.

## Section 6 | Proper Assignment of Officials

Assignors are expected to assign officials in accordance with the level of training provided by the Federation Referee Program. Each State Referee Committee and/or SRA is empowered to take action against assignors who assign officials to games whose competitive levels are above and beyond the level of training provided. The level of training provided for an official is denoted by his or her referee grade.

## Section 7 | Registered Assignors

No one shall assign or appoint a referee, assistant referee or fourth official in any match under the sanction or jurisdiction (direct or indirect) of the Federation who is not registered as a Referee Assignor with the Federation for the current year. A state association, league or tournament may appoint an unregistered assignor in an emergency who may not serve past the end of the current Fiscal year without becoming registered. This section does not apply to an assignment to any youth recreational or house league match.

# POLICY 531-9 | MISCONDUCT TOWARD GAME OFFICIALS

## Section 1 | General

Misconduct against Referees may occur before, during, and/or after the match, specifically when the Referee arrives at and/or departs the venue. Misconduct may occur also at later times when directly related to duties of a match affiliated with U.S. Soccer or its Organization Members.

## Section 2 | Rule Application

- A. This policy shall supersede any inconsistent rules of Member Organizations that pertain to assault, abuse, or gross mistreatment upon Federation Game Officials (i.e., Referees) the manner and means of hearings, appeals, and rehearing(s) in matters pertaining thereto. However, this policy does not supersede any codes of conduct, which may be enforced in addition to this policy.
- B. Nothing in this policy rule shall be construed to restrict or limit any league, event/tournament or Member Organization from applying equal or greater restrictions to anyone not listed in section 4(a)(1) of this policy (i.e., a spectator associated with a club or team).
- C. This policy shall not apply to players, coaches, managers, club officials, or league officials while participating in Professional League Member activities. U.S. Soccer Policy 202-2 covers participants in professional matches.

## Section 3 | Terms and References

As used in this policy:

1. "Referee" includes the following:
  - a. All currently registered USSF Referees, assistant Referees, fourth officials, match officials, or others duly appointed (i.e., by Member Organizations) to assist in officiating in a sanctioned match or a similar USSF-affiliated activity (e.g., scrimmage). A Referee who is not certified or registered with U.S. Soccer or Member Organization may not be covered by this policy. Refer to the below section for emergency situations.
  - b. Any non-licensed, non-registered person serving in an emergency capacity as a Referee or any club assistant Referee under USSF policies.



- c. Any person serving in a Referee support function, such as Referee mentors, Referee coaches, and other Referee support staff at the venue.
  - d. All references to "Referee" henceforth cover the above definition for all U.S. Soccer policies only.
- 2. "Hearing" means a meeting of at least three neutral members, one of whom is designated or elected to serve as chairperson. The hearing shall be comprised by and conducted pursuant to guidelines established by the Federation and followed by the Member Organization.
- 3. For the purposes of this policy, a Referee is protected by U.S. Soccer policy from the time they arrive at the venue (which shall include the parking area), until their departure from the venue. For the purposes of this policy, "Protected Party" means a member of the Referee's family or household, or a guest of the Referee at the match or match venue. All U.S. Soccer policies are in addition to the local, state, and Federal laws.
  - a. Referee assault is any deliberate physical action against a Referee. Referee abuse is extreme, deliberate, and non-contact behavior that causes a Referee or Protected Party significant harm. Actions in this category may be subject to an immediate suspension, meaning that the perpetrator cannot appear at the next sanctioned match. Assault and abuse include, but not limited to, the following actions or behavior committed against a Referee or Protected Parties:
    - i. Imposing physical harm upon a Referee or a Protected Party, including by use of objects or equipment.
    - ii. Any act that endangers the Referee's physical wellbeing, whether deliberate or merely reckless.
    - iii. Any form of unwanted physical contact, including but not limited to pushing, hitting, striking, kicking, choking, or spitting at the Referee.
    - iv. Any behavior that constitutes a criminal offense under any applicable law.
    - v. Threatening, either directly or in insinuation, physical harm, including by use of objects or equipment, to a Referee or a Protected Party or property. Threatening is defined as any statement or action that instills reasonable fear of acts of violence to a person's safety or property.
    - vi. Threats of harm or any retaliatory action against the Referee or their Protected Parties, including threat of exclusion from assignment or future participation opportunity.
- 4. Actions that do not meet above assault or abuse definitions, but cause a Referee or Protected Party harm, may be subject to U.S. Soccer's gross mistreatment framework. Gross mistreatment means any deliberate, non-contact behavior that is expected to cause harm to a Referee. Gross mistreatment includes, but not limited to, the following actions or behavior committed against a Referee or Protected Parties:
  - a. Severe or repeated harassment, including hate speech or discriminatory remarks based on race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, disabilities, or any other legally protected characteristic.
  - b. Extreme verbal attacks that would cause emotional harm to a reasonable person.
  - c. Approaching a Referee when they arrive or depart the venue with aggression (e.g., intimidation).
  - d. Any form of cyberbullying, including spreading false information about the Referee, sharing the Referee's personal information (aka doxing), or publicly posting content that ridicules or mocks the Referee or uses hate speech.
  - e. Questioning the Referee's character, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, or impartiality.
  - f. Yelling insults, taunting, making, or expressing derogatory/belittling remarks towards a Referee.



- g. Pervasive action that belittles or undermines the Referee's authority or intended to cast doubt on the Referee.

## Section 4 | Jurisdiction and Hearings

### A. General

1. When any amateur or professional player, coach, manager, club official or game official assaults, abuses or grossly mistreats a Referee, the original jurisdiction to adjudicate the matter shall vest immediately in the responsible Member Organization which is affiliated with the Federation.
2. When an allegation of assault or abuse is verified by the Member Organization the accused person is automatically suspended until the hearing on the assault or abuse.
3. The Member Organization must hold a hearing within thirty (30) days of the verification by the Member of the gross mistreatment, assault, or abuse or, if applicable, the thirty-day period provided by subsection (B)(3) of this section. If the Member does not adjudicate the matter within that period of time, original jurisdiction shall immediately vest in the Federation's Appeals Committee to adjudicate the matter, to which the same provisions as to the term of suspension shall apply.
4. Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind an automatic suspension for assault or abuse.

### B. Events and Tournaments

1. In the event of assault, abuse, or gross mistreatment of a Referee occurs in an event outside the alleged offender's home state, the Referee shall (A) immediately notify the State Referee Administrator in his/her home state, and/or (B) forward a copy of the game report and his/her comments on the incident to the Event/Tournament Chairman.
2. The Event/Tournament Chairperson shall have the right to immediately convene a hearing at the site of the Event/Tournament, at which the alleged offender, the coach of the alleged offender when the offender is a player, and the game official should be present. Information presented at this hearing shall promptly be relayed to the alleged offender's Member Organization by the Event/Tournament Chairperson, both orally and in writing; however, failure to provide written information shall not restrict the offender's home Member Organization from taking action with regard to any Referee gross mistreatment, assault, or abuse.
3. Final jurisdiction shall vest with the alleged offender's home Member Organization. A hearing shall be held by that Member Organization within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the initial report of the gross mistreatment, assault, or abuse on a Referee.

## Section 5 | Penalties and Suspensions

Penalties for violation of this policy shall be assigned according to the Penalties Matrix in effect at the time the misconduct allegedly occurred, available [here](#). The Penalties Matrix will be managed by U.S. Soccer Staff and Secretary General and may be amended and updated at any time by U.S. Soccer's Technical Development Committee.<sup>2</sup>

## Section 6 | Appeals

A person who is found to have committed gross mistreatment, assault, and/or abuse may appeal to the Appeals Committee by following the procedures of Federation Bylaw 704 within fourteen (14) days from receipt of the decision of the Member Organization.

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<sup>2</sup> Mandatory reporters under the Safe Sport Act must also report child abuse to law enforcement and to the U.S. Center for SafeSport ("SafeSport"), and must report any sexual misconduct, regardless of the age of involved.



## Section 7 | Procedure for Reporting Assault and Abuse

- A. Procedures for reporting of Referee assault, abuse, and/or gross mistreatment shall be developed and disseminated by the U.S. Soccer's Technical Development Committee.
- B. Referees shall transmit a written report of the alleged assault, abuse, or gross mistreatment, or both, within 48 hours of the incident (unless there is a valid reason for later reporting) to the designee of the Member Organization and/or the State Referee Administrator.
- C. For tournaments or special events, the Referee shall transmit a written report to the tournament director on the day of the incident and/or to the referee's home state SRA, if applicable, within 72 hours of the incident.
- D. The Referee should include the following information in the report:
  1. Match details, including but not limited to team information, age group, score, and date.
  2. Detailed statement about the incident, including the definition of the behavior or action (i.e., assault, abuse, mistreatment).

The Competition Authority shall submit the following information to the Member Organization or SRA:

1. All documents, exhibits and other evidence in the case.
2. Copies of all rules, procedures, and bylaws used to support the charges and to conduct the hearing.
3. The notice of charges and/or hearing provided the defendant/appellant.
4. The decision of the hearing body and any appeals decisions.

If audio or video clips are made part of the record, there must be copies of any such video or audio delivered to the Federation without any editing.

If a written transcript has been prepared, it shall be included as part of the record.

The record must be in English. If Members accept documents in other languages, then the Member shall be responsible for providing English translations of the documents prepared by a neutral translator agreed to by the parties.

If the record is not submitted in accordance with this policy, the appeal timetable may be put on hold pending the completion of the record or the appeal may be dismissed. If the appeals timetable is put on hold, the appealing party may apply to the Federation to have their penalty suspended until the case is decided.

## POLICY 531-10 | MISCONDUCT OF GAME OFFICIALS

### Section 1 | Terms and References

- A. "Game officials" includes the following:
  1. all currently registered USSF referees, assistant referees, fourth officials or others appointed to assist in officiating in a match.
  2. any non-licensed, non-registered person serving in an emergency capacity as a referee (under Rule 3040).
  3. any club assistant referee.
  4. any referee development program person performing any official function at a match.
- B. "Referee development program person" includes any referee, referee administrator, referee assessor, referee instructor, referee assignor, or other person serving in such capacity in a line or supervisory position, including members of any referee committee appointed by the Federation, its Divisions, Affiliates or Associates, a State Association, or a competition, tournament or other appropriate authority.



- C. “Hearing” means a meeting of at least five members, one of which is designated or elected to serve as Chairperson. The Chairperson of a hearing shall not vote except to break a tie vote. Such members, including the Chairperson, shall not be the State Referee Administrator, the State Director of Referee Instruction, the State Director of Referee Assessment, a Federation National or FIFA Referee, or any other member of the State Referee Administration.
- D. “State Association” shall be that State Association through which the game official is registered or referee development is appointed. Where a state has both Amateur and Youth National State Associations, the reference shall mean that State Association which has legal authority within its state to administer the registration of the referee or the appointment of the referee development program person charged.

## Section 2 | Procedures

- A. **Misconduct at a Match** | When any game official is accused of having committed misconduct toward another game official, participant, or spectator at a match, or of having a conflict of interest, the original jurisdiction to adjudicate the matter shall vest immediately in the State Association or Organization Member through which the accused game official is registered. In the situation where Amateur and Youth State Associations exist in a state, and the incident of alleged misconduct occurred at a match sanctioned by one State Association, jurisdiction shall vest with the State Association sanctioning the match in question.
- B. **Misconduct Away From a Match** | When any game official, referee, referee assistant or referee development program person is accused of unethical conduct, misuse or abuse of authority or conflict of interest in any matter in the pursuit of or may affect the individual’s official dealings within and as authorized by the Federation, its Divisions, Affiliates or Associates, a State Association or Organization Member, or a competition, tournament or other appropriate authority, the matter shall vest immediately in the State Association through which the accused game official is registered or through which the referee development program person is appointed.
- C. Any allegation of misconduct or of conflict of interest by a game official as described by subsection (A) of this section, or of unethical conduct, misuse or abuse of authority or conflict of interest as described by subsection (B) of this section, shall be made in writing to the State Referee Administrator or to the State Association(s) or Organization Member that shall report all such allegations including any allegations against the State Referee Administrator, to the State Association(s) or Organization Members through which the accused game official is registered or through which the accused referee development program person is appointed.
- D. Upon receipt by the appropriate Organization Member of a verified written complaint, a hearing shall be conducted within thirty (30) days from verification pursuant to guidelines established by the Organization Member having jurisdiction as provided by subsection (A) or (B) of this section. The guidelines may include referring the complaint to the State Referee Committee for the hearing. The hearings and appeal process shall provide for adequate due process for the accused person including proper notice of charges, the right to bring witnesses in defense, and the right to confront and to cross- examine the accusers.
- E. The Chairman of the hearing committee shall transmit the findings of the committee in writing to all parties concerned including the accused and the accusers and to the State Association(s) or Organization Member within seven (7) days of the hearing.





- F. Any party subject to penalties shall receive, at the time of notification of the decision, a notice of the rights of appeal and a copy of the procedures and deadline dates required for such an appeal to be properly considered. Time for filing an appeal shall start with the date of official receipt of the decision by the party making the appeal.

### **Section 3 | Penalties**

- A. The severity of the penalty imposed upon an individual shall be determined by the decision-making body having jurisdiction.
- B. Penalties may be among the following:
  - 1. letter of reprimand;
  - 2. a fine;
  - 3. suspension from all active participation as a Federation-sanctioned referee for a fixed period of time;
  - 4. suspension from all active participation in the Federation for a fixed period of time;
  - 5. any combination of clauses (1), (2), (3) or (4) of this subsection; and
  - 6. dismissal from the Federation.
- C. Any individual while under suspension from all Federation activity may not take part in any activity sponsored by the Federation or its members.

### **Section 4 | Appeals**

- A. Any game official who is found guilty of misconduct as defined in this rule may appeal the decision of the hearing committee as follows:
  - 1. to a Referee Disciplinary Committee jointly appointed by the Amateur and Youth State Associations.
  - 2. to the Federation Appeals Committee as provided under Federation Bylaw 704.
- B. The party appealing the decision of a committee shall have ten (10) days to file the notice of appeal of a decision. Time for filing an appeal shall start with the date of official receipt of the decision by the party making the appeal.

## **POLICY 531-11 | NATIONAL REFEREE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

### **Section 1 | Vision**

Provide an environment where officials of all levels have access to training and resources that will help them to develop to the best of their abilities so they can service and support the growth of soccer by promoting the safety, equality, and enjoyment of the game.

### **Section 2 | Mission**

Commit to and display excellence in the areas of governance, administration, development, and leadership throughout all levels of the program.

### **Section 3 | Standards of Conduct**

The standards of conduct established by the Federation serve to define general guidelines used in determining whether members of the Federation Referee Program act within acceptable limits so far as ethical conduct or conflicts of interest are reflected in their actions. Membership is a privilege offered and granted to individuals who perform capably as officials, instructors, assignors, assessors, and administrators during sanctioned Federation Referee Program activities. Membership carries with it an obligation for each individual member to uphold and promote the stated goals and objectives of the Federation and do nothing to bring the Federation into disrepute or work against its goals and objectives.





Any conduct that is considered unethical or a conflict of interest shall be subject to possible disciplinary actions.

#### **Section 4 | Code of Ethics for the Federation Referee Program**

All members of the Federation Referee Program are expected to:

- I. Consider it a privilege to be part of the Federation Referee Program and use actions that will reflect credit upon that organization and its affiliates;
- II. Maintain the dignity of the position;
- III. Conduct themselves ethically and honorably;
- IV. Treat themselves and others respectfully and honestly;
- V. Perform duties knowledgeably and in accordance with the Laws of the Game;
- VI. Adhere to all policies and requirements of the Federation Referee Program;
- VII. Safeguard confidential registration and performance information;
- VIII. Give priority to all Federation affiliated assignments and programs;
- IX. Honor all Federation affiliated assignments and obligations;
- X. Not discriminate against or take advantage of any individual or group on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

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

#### **POLICY 532-1 | REFEREE REGISTRATION**

The State Referee Committee shall submit registrations for their officials, instructors, assignors and assessors within thirty (30) days to the Federation. The thirty (30) days is from when the individual completes their last requirement for their selected registration type and grade.

#### **Policy 543-1 | Special Youth Player Privileges**

Registered youth players shall be allowed admission at half-price to all Open Cup games and to games played by visiting foreign teams when such games are staged under the direct organization of the United States Soccer Federation.

#### **POLICY 601-1 | PLAYER STATUS | ADULT OR PROFESSIONAL**

##### **Section 1**

Under the policies rules of this Federation, players are either amateur or professional as defined in this policy.

##### **Section 2**

A professional player is a person who receives or has received payment for playing or who signs a professional form of this Federation.

##### **Section 3**

An amateur player is any person other than a professional player. An amateur player may not receive and retain any remuneration for playing except expenses directly related to a game or games which have actually been incurred by the player.

##### **Section 4**

This Federation recognizes the definition of an amateur player of the International Olympic Committee in regard to the selection of the United States Olympic Soccer Teams.



## **POLICY 601-2 | REGISTRATION OF PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS | REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

### **Section 1 | Registration Required**

Every professional player shall be registered on a Federation professional player registration form. The fee for registration, release, transfer, or notice of loan of a professional player under this rule shall be determined by the Board of Directors. A professional player is not a member of a club and may not play for a club until he has been registered with the Secretary General of this Federation under this rule except as further provided in this rule.

### **Section 2 | Clubs Eligible to Register Professional Players**

Any club which is a member of an association or league affiliated with this Federation may register a professional player, except no professional player may be registered to compete on a youth team (u-19 or younger) which is a member of an Organization Member.

### **Section 3 | Registration Procedure**

- A. A properly completed professional form and a photocopy of the player's contract giving details as outlined in Policy 601-3, section 3 shall be forwarded to the Secretary General of the Federation together with the applicable fee within five (5) days after being signed by the player.
- B. Registration under this rule is not effective until it is acknowledged by the Secretary General of this Federation by the club receiving the player's registration number and date of registration.
- C. Each professional player registered shall be given a registration number and date of registration.
- D. The date of registration shall be the earlier of the dates when the completed form and applicable fee are received by the Secretary General of this Federation or are postmarked if they are sent by United States mail (excluding metered mail).
- E. The Secretary General of this Federation shall notify the Secretary of the interested Professional League of the registration of each professional player within seven (7) days after filing of the properly completed form and applicable fee, and shall include the player on a list of professional players that will be made available to all Adult State Associations.

### **Section 4 | Period of Registration**

A professional player under contract shall be registered for the period of the contract. The registration fee shall be fixed by the Board of Directors. Registration for contract option terms will also be required. Such option term registration shall be automatically canceled if option is not exercised, and option registration fees shall be returned to the club.

### **Section 5 | Transfers and Releases**

- A. A player registered on a professional form may be transferred to another club (Form PT) or may be released by his club (Form PR).
- B. A properly completed transfer or release form under this rule together with the applicable fee shall be forwarded to the Secretary General of this Federation within five (5) days after being signed by the club, and after proper approval by the club's professional league or Adult State Association.
- C. A transfer or release under this rule is not effective until it is acknowledged by the Secretary General of this Federation.
- D. The Secretary General of this Federation shall notify the Secretary of the interested Adult State Association or Professional League of each transfer or release of a professional player within seven (7) days after filing of the properly completed form and applicable fee by forwarding a copy of the form to such Secretary.



## Section 6 | Registration Exclusivity and Player Loans

A professional player may not play for any club other than the club for which he is registered unless:

1. the club has filed a completed notice of player loan to the other club together with the applicable fee with the Secretary General of this Federation and this notice has been acknowledged by the Secretary General; or
2. the player will be playing for the other club or team in a non-competitive game such as an exhibition, all-star, or benefit game.

## Section 7 | Notice of Player Loan Procedure

- A. A properly completed notice of player loan form (Form NPL) shall be forwarded to the Secretary General of this Federation together with the applicable fee within five (5) days after being signed by the club. No NPL form may be executed that provided for a longer period of time than the expiration date of the registration P form, in accordance with section 4 of this rule.
- B. A player loan may be canceled at any time by the loaning club which shall forward a properly completed notice of loan cancellation form (Form NPLC) to the Secretary General of this Federation together with the applicable fee.
- C. A player loan or loan cancellation is not effective under this rule until it is acknowledged by the Secretary General of this Federation.
- D. The Secretary General of this Federation, or his designee, shall notify the Secretary of each interested Adult State Association or Professional League of each player loan or loan cancellation within seven (7) days after filing of the properly completed form and applicable fee by forwarding a copy of the form to such Secretary.

## POLICY 601-3 | PROFESSIONAL PLAYER CONTRACT

### Section 1

A club may enter into a contract with a professional player for any length of time that is mutually agreeable between the player and the club.

### Section 2

The player must be registered in accordance with Policy 601-2 and Policy 202-1, Section 2(d).

### Section 3

A photocopy of the duly executed contract showing the commencement date of the signing, expiration date, and option periods including also full insurance coverage details relating to the player (and amendments to the insurance must be advised within seven (7) days of any change), must be submitted to the Federation with the registration form(s).

### Section 4

No financial information relating to the player's contract is required.

## POLICY 601-4 | AMATEUR REINSTATEMENT

### Section 1

A professional player may be reinstated as an amateur player as provided by this policy.

### Section 2

A professional player who is currently registered as a professional player with any club can apply to the Federation to be reinstated as an amateur only with the permission of that club and the Adult State Association or Professional League with which that club is affiliated.



### Section 3

An application for reinstatement as an amateur must be made on the Federation reinstatement form and both the completed form and the applicable fee must be filed with the Secretary General of this Federation.

### Section 4

The Registrar shall issue approval of the reinstatement to amateur status within fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request, appropriate fees, and compliance with these rules. However, the player's reinstatement to amateur status is not effective until the day after thirty (30) days have elapsed from the day that player competed in his last match with his club as a professional player.

### Section 5

A professional player who is not currently registered as a professional player with any professional division club or league, who has not been a party to a professional player contract with a professional division club or league for a period of one year or longer, and who has not applied for reinstatement as an amateur under Sections 3 and 4 of this Policy, shall be automatically reinstated to amateur status by the Secretary General unless the player affirmatively states to the Secretary General in writing that he or she does not wish to be reinstated to amateur status. Reinstatements under this Section 5 shall take effect on the 366<sup>th</sup> day after the date the player was last a party to a professional player contract with a professional division, club or league. An updated list of professional status players shall be published to Organization Members by the Federation on a monthly basis.

Notwithstanding the above, an out-of-contract, professional player who was not registered with a Professional League and who has not been party to a professional player contract for a period of thirty (30) days or longer shall automatically be reinstated to amateur status by the Secretary General unless the player affirmatively states to the Secretary General in writing that he or she does not wish to be reinstated to amateur status.

## POLICY 601-5 | REGISTRATION OF AMATEUR PLAYERS

### Section 1 | Restriction of Players

An amateur player (youth or adult) may not be restricted as to the team he/she may play for due to his/her race, religion or national origin.

### Section 2 | Adult Amateur Players

- A. Every adult amateur player shall be registered with the Federation by electronic means in a format approved by the Board of Directors. The fee for registration, release, or transfer of an adult amateur player under any provision of this rule shall be determined by the National Council from time to time.
- B. These rules apply only to State Association Members and players except as specifically stated otherwise.

### Section 3 | Youth Amateur Players

- A. Every youth player shall be registered with the Federation by electronic means in a format approved by the Board of Directors. The fee for registration, release or transfer of a youth amateur player under any provision of this rule shall be determined by the National Council from time to time.
- B. These rules apply only to State Association Members and players except as specifically stated otherwise.



## Section 4 | Youth-Adult Relationship

A youth player may play an unlimited number of adult games without losing his or her youth eligibility. The youth player must notify his or her youth coach or other authorized team official of the player's intention to play adult games. The youth player shall request, in writing

1. eligibility clearance from the Youth State Association through which the player is registered, and
2. permission from the appropriate Adult State Association or National or Regional Adult League in which the adult team upon which the player will be playing plays.

When the clearance and permission have been granted, the Adult State Association or National or Regional Adult League, as the case may be, has sole discretion in permitting a youth player to play Adult games and will be responsible for establishing the procedure under which this will be implemented.

## Section 5 | State Association Responsibilities

- A. State Associations shall have full powers in the matter of registration or release of all amateur players within their respective jurisdictions in the manner and under the conditions set forth in this rule, said State Associations to furnish the Secretary General of this Federation, within thirty (30) days after making the registration, a list of such registrations, giving the names and addresses of the players and the clubs for which they are registered.
- B. The affiliated bodies are to be responsible and accountable to the Federation for all such revenue. Player registration fees must be paid to the Federation, not later than ninety (90) days, after the date of registration. All player registrations should be duly processed prior to the Annual General Meeting to ensure accurate Divisional membership totals.

## Section 6 | Inclusion Policy

- A. To clarify the Bylaws, membership of the Federation is open to all soccer organizations and all soccer players, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators and officials without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or national origin.
- B. For the purposes of registration on gender-based amateur teams, a player may register with the gender team with which the player identifies, and confirmation sufficient for guaranteeing access shall be satisfied by documentation or evidence that shows the stated gender is sincerely held, and part of a person's core identity. Documentation satisfying the herein stated standard includes, but is not limited to, government-issued documentation or documentation prepared by a health care provider, counselor, or other qualified professional not related to the player.
- C. This policy shall not apply to the Federation's National Teams programs, but application of this or a similar policy shall be re-evaluated at such time as FIFA addresses the issue.
- D. This policy shall not apply to Professional Leagues.

## POLICY 601-6 | INTERNATIONAL CLEARANCES

For a player who comes to the United States on or after the player is 10 years of age, the player must request and receive an international clearance from the Federation.

## POLICY 601-7 | COMPETITION PARTICIPATION

### Section 1

- A. Any properly registered team has the right to enter any competition involving Organization Members or their members provided that it is eligible under the rules of that competition, pays all required fees, and is in good standing.



- B. No Organization Member or member of an Organization Member shall interfere with the opportunity of a player, coach or team to travel to compete in a competition, including a game, scrimmage, tournament or league governed by Section 1(A) above and shall not deny permission to travel unless that player, coach or team has been prohibited from doing so for disciplinary reason pursuant to the due process requirements set forth in Bylaw 701. The foregoing shall not prevent Organization Members and their members from having bylaws, rules, or policies that penalize teams or players for failing to meet their previously scheduled game commitments or prevent Organization Members from enforcing reasonable notification requirements prior to travel.
- C. Any Organization Member or member of an Organization Member, player, coach or individual denied the right to participate in any competition involving Organization Members or their members has the right of appeal and/or grievance through the applicable procedures set forth in Federation Bylaws and Policies.

## Section 2

- A. Tournaments hosted by Organization Members or their members shall fall within one of the following two classes:
  - 1. Unrestricted Tournament: A tournament that is open to all Federation affiliated participants. Any tournament that allows international participants must be an Unrestricted Tournament.
  - 2. Restricted Tournament: A tournament that is open only to members of a single Organization Member or a subset thereof.
- B. Organization Members and their members shall be entitled to sponsor and/or approve tournaments in and according to reasonable requirements they establish as long as done so in a fair and timely manner. No Organization Member or member of an Organization Member shall have a bylaw, rule or policy that prohibits their members from participating in Unrestricted Tournaments. Organization Members may not deny approval to host a tournament on the basis that the tournament is Unrestricted.

## Section 3

This policy does not apply to Professional Leagues or Indoor Professional Leagues.

## POLICY 601-8 | PROFESSIONAL LEAGUE PLAYER REGISTRATION

### Section 1 | Rosters

- A. Seven (7) days prior to the start of a Professional League's Season, the League must provide the Federation with a current roster for each U.S. based team, listing each player, his status (active list, disabled list, etc.) and his last club, including the country where that club is located if it is not in the United States.
- B. At all other times, the Professional League office must telefax the Federation the same day that a player has been added to (signed) or deleted from a member club's roster.
  - 1. Additions: The telefax must indicate:
    - a. The name of the League
    - b. The name of the Club
    - c. The length of the registration (starting and ending dates)
    - d. The name of the club the player last played for and the country where that club is located if it is not in the United States, to assure that the proper clearance has been received, especially if it involves an international or inter- league transfer.
  - 2. Deletions (Termination of Registration): The telefax must indicate:
    - a. The name of the League
    - b. The name of the Club



- c. Whether the deletion is an unconditional release or an assignment to another club. If the latter, the name of the assignee club and the country where that club is located if outside the United States, must be indicated.

## Section 2

The Federation may request from a Professional league, at the midpoint of the League's season and at the end of its season, the current club roster of its member clubs.

## Section 3

Complete and accurate registrations must be received by the Federation within fourteen (14) days of a player being added to a member club roster, along with the proper fees and club releases, or the player shall not be permitted to play until this has been accomplished.

## Section 4

Player registrations may be signed for the duration of the contract period plus options, unless:

- A. The player is a loan player, in which case only separate registrations signed for the duration of the loan period for each year will be acceptable.
- B. The clearance is conditional and does not provide for any period other than the current year, even though the registration extends thereafter, in which case the registration will only be approved for the period so designated in the clearance.

## Section 5

No League shall permit a player to play until it has received a properly completed registration and registration fee, and has confirmation of clearance:

- A. from the Federation Registrar, for a player who was last registered with a team from a foreign National Association.
- B. from the Federation Registrar, for a professional player who was last registered with a team outside its League but located within the United States.
- C. for amateur players, from the State Association Registrar where the player was last registered as an amateur.

## Section 6 | Enforcement

For non-compliance with this procedure, a fine or fines as determined annually by the Federation NBOD shall be imposed by the Federation on the League. The offending club and its league shall be determined to be not in good standing until the fine is paid.

## Section 7 | Separate Agreements on International Clearances Regarding National Team Participation

- A. The Federation requests all Federation Affiliated Professional Leagues to advise their member clubs that national associations of foreign countries are requiring players who are candidates for their national teams to be returned for official competition matches (World Cup and Olympics) and that this issue must be addressed and agreed upon by the foreign club and association before the transfer is finalized.
- B. In addition, the Federation will not permit any U.S. citizen player to be transferred to a club outside the United States without a separate agreement requiring the return of the player for official competition matches (World Cup and Olympics). Be certain this matter is addressed and agreed upon by the foreign club prior to the finalizing of an agreement.

*(Also see Registration of Professional Players for additional information.)*





## Section 8 | Professional Players Registered as Amateur Players

If the Federation receives written allegations that a player registered as an amateur player has received remuneration other than actual expenses incurred during the course of the player's participation in any activity connected with playing for the team, the player is suspended on the 5<sup>th</sup> day after the Federation notifies the teams of the allegations. The team is not in good standing with the Federation as of that 5<sup>th</sup> day unless, during the 5-day period, the team provides acceptable documentation to the Federation that the player had not received such remuneration. The player remains suspended until properly registered as a professional player and the appropriate registration fee is paid, and the team remains not in good standing until it pays a penalty of \$1,000. For purposes of this paragraph, a player may be remunerated actual expenses for only the following: travel and hotel expenses incurred through the involvement in a match, the costs of the player's equipment, insurance, and training costs.

## Section 9 | Contracts with Option Period Terms

If a team makes a contract with a player on or after May 22, 1995, and the contract includes an option period as an option term, the Federation must be provided with proper documentation that the option was properly exercised.

## Section 10 | Unregistered Players

If a team has a player that it has not registered with the Federation, the team is not in good standing with the Federation, and the team must pay the Federation a penalty of \$100 for each match the team plays during the period the player is not registered. This penalty is to be paid for each unregistered player. The team remains not in good standing with the Federation until each unregistered player is properly registered with the Federation and the appropriate registration fee is paid for each player and the penalty is paid.

## Section 11 | Professional Player Status Committee

- A. The United States Soccer Federation establishes a Professional Player Status Committee to resolve, through binding arbitration, professional player registration matters among professional leagues of the Federation. The Committee shall be composed of a separate panel convened by the Secretary General
  1. for each request or group of requests about professional player registrations filed with the Secretary General by professional leagues, teams, or players; or
  2. when the Federation has determined the registration status of a player and the affected leagues have not filed a request but do not agree with the Federation's determination. Each panel of the Committee convened by the Secretary General has the authority to consider, arbitrate, and decide each matter referred to it. The decision of the panel is final and binding.
- B. A panel convened under subsection (A) shall be composed of the following panelists:
  1. a panelist designated, by the date specified by the Secretary General, by each professional league that is a party to the matter, or, if not designated by that date, a panelist designated by the Secretary General for each league not making a designation by the specified date;
  2. a Chairman to be designated by the Secretary General; and
  3. if the number of panelists designated under clauses (a) and (b) of this paragraph is an even number, one additional panelist designated by the Secretary General.
  4. If a panelist, other than the Chairman, does not attend a scheduled meeting of the panel, the panelist waives his or her right to attend and participate in the meeting of the panel. The panel may meet and has the authority to act based only on those panelists attending. If the Chairman does not attend, the Secretary General may designate another Chairman.
  5. The Chairman of a panel shall be the Chief Administrative Officer for that panel.
  6. Any panelist designated by the Secretary General shall be designated from among the





members of the National Board of Directors of the Federation, the staff of the Federation, or both.

7. A meeting of the panel may take place in person or by conference call. If a meeting is to take place in person, any person may attend a meeting by means of a conference call.
  8. Each request filed under subsection (A) (1) shall be accompanied by a fee of \$100. When a panel is convened under subsection (A) (2), a \$100 fee shall be assessed against each of the affected leagues. Fees paid under this paragraph are a non-refundable administrative fee.
- C. The Secretary General may prescribe regulations appropriate to carry out this section.

## **POLICY 601-9 | REGISTRATION**

A player must register with an Organization Member according to the registration rules of that Organization Member.

## **POLICY 601-10 | RECOGNITION OF RISK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

### **Section 1**

A disqualification or other disciplinary action for violation of Risk Management policies imposed by an Organization Member against a person participating or seeking membership in a program of the Federation, an Organization Member, or a program of an Organization Member shall be recognized by all Organization Members.

### **Section 2**

A Risk Management disqualification imposed by an Organization Member upon a prospective member who has been convicted of a felony, a crime of violence, or a criminal offense against a person shall be recognized by all Organization Members upon proper notification to and by the Federation.

### **Section 3**

An Organization Member's Board of Directors, its designee or the Board of Directors of a member of an Organization Member or its designee shall conduct a review or hearing before allowing membership within the Organization Member to any individual who has been disqualified or otherwise disciplined by another Organization Member for violation of its Risk Management policies. The review or hearing shall be limited to whether the conduct giving rise to the Risk Management action taken by the other Organization Member constitutes a violation of the prospective Organization Member's Risk Management policies.

### **Section 4**

Nothing herein shall prevent an Organization Member from disqualifying other prospective members in accordance with its own Risk Management policies.

## **POLICY 701 -1 | HEARING PROCEDURES**

This policy provides the minimum rights that each party would have at a hearing with respect to the right to assistance in presenting one's case at a hearing, as must be allowed under Federation Bylaw 701(5). These minimum rights apply to hearings conducted by Organization Members and their members or other hearing body. A copy of these minimum rights should be delivered to the parties with the notice of the hearing.

- A. In the case of an actual or apparent conflict of interest as to a particular matter before a hearing panel member, a replacement shall be named. Space needed after this for consistent formatting
- B. Each party at a hearing shall have the right to have an individual present at the hearing to assist the party in presenting the party's case. Such individual may, but shall not be required to be, an attorney.
- C. If the Organization Member or member of the Organization Member ("Complainant") is represented by another individual at any hearing and the hearing panel allows that individual to speak, question the parties and/or witnesses, or grants that individual any other rights, then it shall afford all other



- parties, or the individual representing the party, including an attorney, the same rights during the course of the hearing as is allowed to the individual representing the Complainant.
- D. If an attorney is present at a hearing to assist a party in presenting the party's case, it shall be made clear at the commencement of any such hearing that the hearing shall proceed in accordance with the Organization Member's hearing rules and procedures. All Federal, State or local Rules of Evidence or Civil Procedure shall not be applicable.
  - E. An Organization Member may provide, as part of its hearing rules and procedures, that an individual assisting a party may be allowed to speak on behalf of the party, make requests or ask questions at the hearing.
  - F. Regardless of whether the Organization Member allows the individual assisting the party the rights to speak, make requests or ask questions, as noted in Paragraph D above, an individual assisting the party in presenting the party's case shall have the right to be physically present in the hearing room, and so as not to interfere with the hearing procedure, it is also recommended that the individual be seated close to the party (either behind or next to the party) so that the party may seek assistance when desired during the course of the hearing.
  - G. During the course of the hearing, the party may confer briefly with the individual who is assisting before making a statement or request or prior to responding to a question. The panel conducting the hearing may limit the frequency and duration of the conferences so as not to unduly interfere with the proceeding.
  - H. If there is confusion or concern, the party may request a recess to confer with the individual assisting the party. Such a request should be granted unless the number of requests by a party becomes unreasonable or the length of a requested recess is deemed by the hearing panel to be unreasonable.
  - I. An individual assisting a party may prepare written materials for the party and collect documents for the party. However, the party must submit or present the materials and documents as materials and documents of the party, and not of the individual assisting. The party has complete responsibility for those materials and documents and is subject to questioning about them.
  - J. Nothing contained in this policy shall prevent an Organization Member from allowing greater rights to assistance than those set forth in Paragraphs A-H above. For example, an Organization Member may, but shall not be obligated to, allow more than one individual to assist a party at any given time.
  - K. The rights, either mandatory or permissible under this policy, shall be consistently applied, and the Organization Member should not arbitrarily allow or disallow the rights set forth above to those individuals assisting a party in the presentation or defense of the party's case.

## **POLICY 702-1 | PARTICIPATION GRIEVANCES**

### **Section 1**

A grievance filed under Bylaw 702 may include supporting evidence and documentation.

### **Section 2**

In the case of an actual or apparent conflict of interest as to a particular matter before a hearing panel member, a replacement shall be named pursuant to the procedure in Bylaw 702.

### **Section 3**

The grievant must serve the responding party, if any in addition to the Federation, within a reasonable time after filing with the Federation, not to exceed 14 business days, without just cause for delay.



## POLICY 703-1 | GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

### Section 1

All grievances under Bylaw 703 must also be submitted to the President.

### Section 2

For the avoidance of doubt, “membership requirements in the USOPC” means compliance with the USOPC Bylaws or the Sports Act.

### Section 3

The grievant must serve the responding party, if any in addition to the Federation, within a reasonable time after filing with the Federation, not to exceed 14 business days, without just cause for delay.

### Section 4 | Hearing Procedures

For all grievance hearings held pursuant to Bylaw 703, the following hearing procedures shall apply:

1. In the case of an actual or apparent conflict of interest as to a particular matter before the Hearing Examiner or athlete, a replacement shall be named pursuant to the procedure in Bylaw 703.
2. If the Hearing Examiner and athlete (the “Panel”) determines that a hearing is required as provided by section 3(c) of Bylaw 703, the Federation staff shall consult with the Panel and the parties to the grievance and determine a mutually convenient time and place to hold the hearing, subject to the requirement of section 3(c) that the hearing take place no later than ninety (90) days after the complaint was filed.
3. The Federation staff shall provide written notice to all parties of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
4.
  - a. The written notice required in paragraph (2) of this section 1 shall also include a date by which each party shall provide to the other parties and to the Panel: (i) a complete list of any witnesses the party will call to testify at the hearing; and (ii) a complete set of any documents, pictures, or other evidence the party will rely upon at the hearing. The date by which this material is due shall be no later than seven (7) days prior to the hearing date and each party shall be permitted to supplement its list of witnesses and/or submit additional documents, for purposes of rebuttal only, within three (3) days of receipt of an opposing party’s submissions. Except for good cause shown, or where an opposing party consents, the Panel shall not accept any written evidence or allow the testimony of any witness not already disclosed pursuant to this subparagraph (a).
  - b. If a complainant files a brief or other statement in support of its complaint prior to the hearing, its brief or other statement is due not later than ten (10) days prior to the hearing. If a respondent files a brief or other statement in opposition to the complaint prior to the hearing, its brief or other statement is due not later than five (5) days prior to the hearing.
  - c. The Panel may allow the parties to file written closing statements after the hearing by the date established by the Panel. Those statements shall not exceed five (5) pages in length, double-spaced, on 8½ x 11 inch paper, unless specifically permitted by the Panel.
5.
  - a. Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, each party shall have equal time to present its case, not to exceed three (3) hours. However, if there is more than one complainant, the complainants shall divide the maximum allocated time of not more than three (3) hours among the complainants. If there is more than one respondent, the respondents shall divide the maximum allocated time of not more than three (3) hours among the respondents. The order of



presentations shall be as follows:

- i. opening statement(s) of complainant(s)
- ii. opening statement(s) of respondents
- iii. presentation of evidence by complainant(s)
- iv. presentation of evidence by respondent(s)
- v. presentation of rebuttal evidence by complainant(s)
- vi. presentation of rebuttal evidence by respondent(s)
- vii. closing statement(s) by complainant(s)
- viii. closing statement(s) by respondent(s)

The Panel shall have full discretion to grant requests to change the order of presentation, add or subtract presentation windows, or alter the time limits as he/she sees fit.

- b. The following shall be charged against the time allocated to the complainant(s) to present their case: items (i), (iii), (v), and (vii) specified in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph (4), all time used in arguing matters regarding the respondent's opening statement(s) and closing statement(s) of respondent(s), and the cross-examination conducted during the presentation of the case by respondent(s) under items (iv) and (vi) specified in subparagraph (a).
  - c. The following shall be charged against the time allocated to the respondent to present their case: items (ii), (iv), (vi), and (viii) specified in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph (4), all time used in arguing matters regarding the opening statement(s) and closing statement(s) of complainant(s), and the cross-examination conducted during the presentation of the case by complainant(s) under items (iii) and (v) specified in subparagraph (a).
  - d. For any motion or other matter presented at the hearing, each party will be allowed up to five (5) minutes to argue the motion or other matter without any time being charged either party. However, if additional time is needed by a party, the additional time shall be charged against the time allocated to that party.
  - e. The Panel shall have full discretion to grant requests to change the order of presentation.
6. At the hearing, minors, whether they be witnesses or principals to the grievance, who have not attained the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
  7. If witnesses cannot be at the hearing, they may give telephonic testimony if the Hearing Examiner and the parties can hear the telephonic testimony and ask questions of the witness.
  8. An attorney or other advisor may counsel a party at a hearing and may present oral arguments and question that party's own witnesses. Unless permitted by the Panel, however, neither a party nor the party's advisor shall be permitted to cross-examine the opposing party's witnesses directly. A party may direct questions to the Panel, who will ask the appropriate individual for an answer if the Panel deems the question relevant.
  9. For all other hearing procedures not specifically addressed in this Policy or the Bylaws, the hearing shall be governed according to the American Arbitration Association's Commercial Arbitration Rules, except that the Panel shall have the full discretion to alter those rules and procedures as the Panel sees fit.



## Section 5 | Panel's Decision

A decision of a panel is final unless appealed as provided by section 4 of bylaw 704 and section 4 of this policy.

## Section 6 | Amicus Briefs

As provided by section 3(b) of Bylaw 703, any Federation Organization Member who is not a party to the grievance shall have the right to file an amicus brief with the Panel, setting forth any issues, arguments, or other matters that it feels are relevant to the grievance and the Panel's resolution thereof. In addition, the Federation shall have the right to file a brief with the Panel, with copies to all parties, providing relevant information that the Federation believes would be helpful to the panel, so long as such brief does not offer an opinion as to how the grievance should ultimately be resolved. Any such brief shall be no longer than ten (10) pages in length, double-spaced, on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper. Any such brief filed in support of the complainant shall be filed and served on all parties on the earlier of (i) fifteen (15) days after the answer to the complaint is filed, or (ii) fifteen (15) days prior the hearing. Any such brief filed on behalf of the respondent, and any Federation brief, shall be filed and served on all the parties on the earlier of (i) ten (10) days after the filing of the last such brief filed in support of the complainant, or (ii) ten (10) days prior to the hearing.

## Section 7 | Appeals

1. Upon issuance of a written decision by the Panel resolving the grievance, either party may appeal this decision to the Federation's Board of Directors. Any such appeal must be submitted within ten (10) days of official receipt of the decision. An appeal is initiated by sending the following items to the attention of the Federation's Secretary General and the President:
  - a. A written submission stating the grounds for appeal, including all arguments in support of the appeal. This written submission shall be no longer than ten (10) pages in length double-spaced, on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper. The appealing party shall send a copy of this written submission to all other parties to the grievance.
  - b. A money order or cashier's check in an amount equal to the appeals fees determined under section 3 of Bylaw 704.
2. Any non-appealing party in a grievance shall have the right to submit a brief in opposition to the appeal within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal. No other briefs or submissions shall be accepted in connection with the appeal.
3. The appealing party's written submission and any opposition briefs shall be presented to the Board of Directors for final resolution of the appeal. As provided by section 4 of Bylaw 703, the Panel's decision may be overturned or amended only by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. There shall be no further right of appeal to any other Federation body from a determination of the Board of Directors.

## POLICY 704-1 | APPEALS COMMITTEE

### Section 1

The Chair of the Appeals Committee (AC) and its members shall be appointed by the President, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The AC shall consist of at least twenty (20) members, at least 20% of whom shall be Athletes.

### Section 2

Three (3) members of the AC shall constitute an Appeals Panel (AP) for the purposes of considering and determining any appeal brought pursuant to Bylaw 705. In any appeal involving an Athlete, at least one (1) member of the AP shall be an Athlete member of the AC. In order to maximize the expertise of the AP



and avoid conflicts of interest, the Chair of the AC shall select the AP as the need arises. The Chair shall also designate one member of the AP to act as the AP's Chairperson, who shall, among other things, be the member of the AP responsible for ensuring that the appeal is considered and determined within the time periods prescribed by the Bylaws. No member of the AP may be from the State Association of the parties.

### **Section 3**

Appeals shall be considered and determined by the AP in person or by telephone conference call at the Chair's direction; consideration and determination of an appeal shall be closed to the public and the parties. The AP may decide to allow oral argument either in person or by telephone, with all parties having the opportunity to participate, before its consideration and determination. If allowed, the AP may set time limits for the oral argument and may hold the oral argument on a day prior to the date the AP will consider and determine the appeal. If the AP decides that oral argument is not necessary, then the AP shall decide the matter based upon the record and the parties' written arguments.

### **Section 4 | Burden**

The appellant shall bear the burden of showing that the decision being appealed from is clearly erroneous.

### **Section 5 | New Evidence**

No new evidence may be presented to the AP unless circumstances have materially changed, or new facts are discovered that were unavailable at the time of the hearing from which appeal is being taken. In such cases, the AP may allow that such new evidence be presented to it provided all parties to the appeal have been given notice and are given an opportunity to respond to the materially changed circumstances or previously unavailable or undiscovered facts.

### **Section 6 | Abandonment**

If an appellant fails to submit arguments by the deadline for submitting appellant's arguments and no continuance has been granted by the AP, the appeal shall be considered abandoned. If oral argument is allowed and the appellant fails to participate in oral argument without excuse, the appeal shall be considered abandoned.

### **Section 7**

The AP shall issue a final written decision within ten (10) days after it has considered and determined the appeal, however, not more than twenty (20) days after initial consideration except for just cause.

### **Section 8**

The decision rendered by an Organization Member from which an appeal is taken may be suspended by the AP only upon written application by the appellant which accompanies the Notice of Appeal and the finding by the AP of good cause shown. Good cause shown may only be made upon a unanimous vote of the AP and a written decision which specifically states that there is a strong likelihood of success upon the appeal and that circumstances are present which clearly show that the appellant will suffer irreparable harm unless the decision from which the appeal is taken is suspended pending the determination of the appeal. The decision of the AP regarding suspension of the decision pending determination of the appeal shall be final and may not be further appealed.

## **POLICY 704-2 | APPEALS RECORD**

The appeals record shall be submitted by the Organization Member using the format attached hereto. The appeals record shall contain, at a minimum, the following:

1. All documents, exhibits and other evidence in the case.
2. Copies of all rules, procedures, and bylaws used to support the charges and to conduct the hearing.



3. The notice of charges and/or hearing provided the defendant/appellant.
4. The decision of the hearing body and any appeals decisions.

The record shall:

1. be numbered in chronological order
2. be indexed
3. contain only one copy of each document.

If audio or videotapes are made part of the record, there must be four (4) copies of any such tape delivered to the Federation. If a written transcript has been prepared, it shall be included as part of the record.

The record must be in English. If Members accept documents in other languages, then the Member shall be responsible for providing English translations of the documents prepared by a neutral translator agreed to by the parties.

If the record is not submitted in accordance with this policy, the appeal timetable may be put on hold pending the completion of the record or the appeal may be dismissed. If the appeals timetable is put on hold, the appealing party may apply to the Federation to have their penalty suspended until the case is decided.

#### INDEX OF DOCUMENTS CONTAINED IN THE CERTIFIED APPEAL RECORD

Case		Date		Index Page	
Record #		Date		Description of Document	

(attach additional sheets as required)

Certificate:

I certify that each party to this appeal was given the opportunity to present documentation before the record was closed and that the above documentation is the entire record considered in connection with this matter.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Appeals Committee Chairperson



## AMENDMENTS TO POLICY MANUAL INDEX

DATE OF AMENDMENT	BPOLICY AMENDED
May 2022	Policy 521-2
February 2024	Policy 102 (4)-1
February 2024	Policy 601-5, Section 6
May 2024	Policy 531-9
May 2025	Policy 231-1, Section 2; 531-9, Section 5