



# **NEBRASKA STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION**

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

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## 1. Compliance & Player Safety

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The rules of the game of soccer as promulgated by the Federation Internationale de Football Association as modified by the United States Soccer Federation and the Youth Division of the United States Soccer Federation shall apply to all affiliated league, club, or team games, except that associations, leagues or clubs may implement variations for competition with approval of the Board of Directors of Nebraska State Soccer. The Board of Directors also may make modifications for any games sponsored by Nebraska State Soccer; however, such variations should be at a minimum and only for the betterment of soccer.

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### Welfare and Safety.

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The welfare and safety of the players, referees and coaches shall be the primary concern of all persons affiliated with Nebraska State Soccer. The physical and mental wellbeing of the players and the referees shall always take precedence over all other matters.

A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to himself or another player. The referee has the final determination if the equipment is safe to the player or another player on the field of play.

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### Weather Safety Plan

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**Lightning Safety** –Before an event, organizers should listen to the latest forecast to determine the likelihood of thunderstorms. If thunderstorms are forecast, organizers should consider canceling or postponing the activity. Once people start to arrive at an activity/event, the guidelines below should be followed.

**Stopping Activities/Events** –In general, a significant lightning threat extends outward from the base of a thunderstorm cloud about 6 to 10 miles. Therefore, people should be in a safe place when a thunderstorm is 6 to 10 miles away. League Representatives, Site Supervisors and/or Referees can stop the activity/event. Team Staff should get the attention of the Referee if they witness any of the criteria within the Safety Plan. Here are some criteria used to stop activities: If you see lightning or If you hear thunder.

**Seeking Safe Shelter** – No place outside is safe in or near a thunderstorm. If an activity/event is stopped get participants, spectators and personnel off the fields and complexes as soon as possible and send them:

- a) Home if you are cancelling the activity/event.
- b) To a hard-topped metal vehicle with the windows closed. Avoid contact with metal in the vehicle and try to keep away from windows. Await further instructions for resuming activities/events.
- c) To a substantial building with wiring and plumbing are the safest places. Buildings and schools offer good protection.

- d) Once inside, stay away from windows and doors and anything that conducts electricity such as corded phones, wiring, plumbing, and anything connected to these. Await further instructions for resuming activities/events.

**Resuming Activities/Events** -Because electrical charges can linger in clouds after a thunderstorm has passed, wait at least 30 minutes after the last site of lightning or sound of thunder before resuming activities.

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### Sportsmanship

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Sportsmanship of all persons registered with Nebraska State Soccer and all persons assisting in any soccer activity of any member of Nebraska State Soccer shall always be stressed and shall take precedence over all rules except physical safety of players, referees, and coaches. Sportsmanship shall take precedence over winning.

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### Responsibility for Conduct

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Unsportsmanlike conduct by any person registered with Nebraska State Soccer or assisting in any soccer activity of any member of Nebraska State Soccer shall be subject to discipline, including fines or suspension, by the Board of Directors of Nebraska State Soccer in such manner as the Board determines.

Affiliate Members, their administrators, board members, coaches (paid or unpaid), players, parents/guardians, and/or independent contractors are responsible for full and complete communication between each other. An Affiliate Member's administrators, board members, coaches (paid or unpaid), and/or independent contractors desiring to contact a player of another Affiliate Member, must contact the player's existing Affiliate Member/team coach, unless the coach is a parent coach and they then must receive permission from the member's Registrar or designee, prior to contacting the player.

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### Compliance with Rules & Regulations

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Clubs shall be responsible for informing and ensuring that all of their members (players, parents, coaches, assistant coaches, Board Members, Administrators etc.) have read, understand, and adhere to all policies of Nebraska State Soccer and the rules of the leagues their teams will participate in during the season. A plea of ignorance to the policies of Nebraska State Soccer is not sufficient in defending a grievance or grounds for a protest or appeal.

All policies will be listed on the Nebraska State Soccer web site under the Policies and Rules link on the resources tab or by contacting the State Office.

Any member of the association who fails to follow the rules and regulations and all policies of Nebraska State Soccer shall be subject to the following:

- a) First Offense – up to \$100 fine and up to two years' probation.
- b) Second Offence – up to \$500 fine and up to two years' probation.
- c) Any Subsequent Offence – up to \$1,000 fine and up to three years' probation.

If the second or subsequent offence occurs while serving a current probation the probations will be served consecutively.

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## Modifications

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Affiliate Members may make modifications of the USSF playing rules, so long as they are confined to competition within that member organization league.

On or before July 15th of each playing season, Affiliate Members shall present rules modifications to the NSSA Rules Committee Chairperson, and upon approval, will be bound by them for the upcoming seasonal year. Failure to do so shall put that club, league or association in poor standing and shall not participate in NSSA, USYSA, USASA or USSF events and activities until this requirement is fulfilled.

When a team enters into any competition outside its league, NSSA/USSF rules will apply.

The Grievance Committee shall not hear appeals arising from modifications of NSSA/USSF rules.

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## 2. Registration

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All Players, Staff and Teams must be registered with Nebraska State Soccer each soccer year (August 1 to July 31) and must abide by the rules and regulations of Nebraska State Soccer.

Registration of Players, Staff and Teams will be in accordance with USSF, USASA and US Youth Soccer.

- a) Players, Staff and Teams will be allowed to be registered until July 31 of the current seasonal year.
- b) Affiliate Member shall be responsible for insuring proper registration of the players and coaches, and affiliation of the teams.
- c) Players and Staff will be considered registered once they are approved by the Affiliate Member or Nebraska State Soccer in the registration program.

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## Registration Dates

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### **Level 1 & 2 Players**

Registration dates for Level 1 & 2 players will open on June 1 of each seasonal year, with a binding date of August 1 of each seasonal year.

The Binding Date is defined as the date on which NSS considers a player bound to their commitment to a specific Affiliate Member. If the player has requested to be released (in writing) from this commitment prior to this date (on or before August 1st) then they are no longer considered bound to the Affiliate Member via NSS

Policy. This does not mean that you are released from any financial commitment that you have previously agreed to or entered into freely with an Affiliate Member. Any financial commitment entered into with an Affiliate Member is between the parents and the member.

NSS does not recognize any binding date(s) for Level 3 players.

### **Level 3 Players**

Registration for Level 3 players will open on June 1 of each seasonal year. All players must be registered before they can participate in any sanctioned activities.

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## Player Commitment

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Once a player registers with an Affiliate Member, they are committed for that upcoming soccer year. If an Affiliate Member collects fees for the year, they will need to refund any fees for programs that have not started if the player leaves the team or transfers to another Affiliate Member.

A player is considered committed to an Affiliate member the moment the player (or for a player less than 18 years of age, the player's parent/legal guardian or guardian) personally or electronically signs the Affiliate Member's registration form and submits a portion of, or the full amount of the fees required by the Affiliate Member. If the player qualifies for a scholarship, once they sign the registration and give written acceptance of the scholarship, they are considered registered.

A committed player may not play for another member organization unless they have permission from their registered member organization or are granted a release from the Affiliate member. Players do not need permission from their current Affiliate Member to participate in a team formation event with another Affiliate Member.

Penalty: Any Affiliate Member parent/legal guardian, player, coach (paid or unpaid), no staff member (paid or unpaid), administrator, board member, independent contractor and/or entities violating this section (e.g., player going to another Affiliate Member practice without permission) will be subject to minimum of a 3-month suspension and up to two years' probation. This can apply to both the player and parent/legal guardian, and the coach/club. On any second or additional offense, all sanctions will double.

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## Proof of Age

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Affiliate Members must verify age of any player entered into the registration software the first time the player is registered using one of the following Proof of Age documents listed below:

- a) Birth certificate, a Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card (DD Form 1173) issued by the uniformed services of the United States, a birth registration issued by an appropriate government agency or board of health records, a passport, an alien registration card issued by the United States Government, a certificate issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service attesting to age, a current driver's license, an unexpired federal, state, or local government identification card (if

documentation of date of birth is required), or a certification of a United States citizen born abroad issued by the appropriate government agency. Hospital, baptismal, or religious certificates will not be accepted.

Parents/Guardians may blackout all information on a copy of the document(s) except for legal first and last name, birth date and gender. Affiliate Members need to inform parents/guardians of their right prior to collection of the document.

Once the proof of age document has been verified and uploaded into the registration system the document needs to be disposed of properly (such as shredding) or return to the parent/guardian. Affiliate Member shall not keep or store documents in any fashion.

Collection by Team Staff (e.g., Coach, Team Manager): Team Staff shall not keep or store documents. If required to collect documents for any tournament or event, Team Staff will have parent/guardian retain possession of the document except for check-in at these events. Team Staff shall return the document to the parent/guardian as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian cannot be present, they will give the document to a person of their choice. This person shall return the document as soon as possible after the event.

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### Age Limits and Roster Limitations

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**Adult-** Age groups shall comprise players who are before the first day or August of the immediately preceding seasonal year:

Over 65 years of age	Over 45 years of age
Over 60 years of age	Over 35 years of age
Over 55 years of age	Under 23 years of age
Over 50 years of age	Under 22 years of age

**Youth-** All Affiliate Members, unless otherwise sanctioned by the board of directors, shall divide play among teams listed as below. Age groups shall be designated per the current registration age chart found on the NSSA website.

19 years of age and under	10 years of age and under
18 years of age and under	9 years of age and under
17 years of age and under	8 years of age and under
16 years of age and under	7 years of age and under
15 years of age and under	6 years of age and under
14 years of age and under	5 years of age and under
13 years of age and under	4 years of age and under
12 years of age and under	3 years of age and under
11 years of age and under	



## Age group restrictions:

- a) Gender – Girls can play on boys' (coed) teams, but boys cannot play on girls' teams.
- b) Teams Rosters – All teams must be rostered to the oldest player on the team.

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## Maximum Roster

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## Program Roster Format

- a) 12U and younger Level 2 and Level 3 teams will be allowed to use the Program format to roster players. The roster size will be unlimited, and players will be allowed to be transferred to teams for events using the Team Roster Format (i.e., Sanctioned Tournaments, Non-Academy Events). Program Roster Format will be allowed for competitions between Academies allowing players to be interchanged.

## Team Roster Format

- a) 12U and below age groups the roster size will be limited to not more than double the number of players on the field as prescribed by the USYSA small-sided play games recommendations.
- b) 13U and above age groups leagues may fix the maximum roster size for teams participating within the league's competitions; provided, however, that no team shall be allowed more than twenty-two (22) players on its roster at any given time during the seasonal year.

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## Player Transfers

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A youth player may transfer between Affiliate Members with the approval of the member's registrar or designee. Players will not participate with another Affiliate Member until they are registered and transferred to that Affiliate Member or have permission of their Affiliate Member Coach (primary coach) or Affiliate Member designee.

**Penalties:** A club or individual who intentionally submits false or inaccurate information relevant to a player record or past or present club affiliated in order to register as a player or to affect a player registration or transfer or to otherwise prevent a player transfer shall be subject to the following:

- a) Individual or Individuals responsible shall receive a four-game suspension.
- b) A club will not be allowed to transfer any players in from another club for up to a period of one year.

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## Participation with Multiple Affiliate Members

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Players 7U and older are allowed to register with up two (2) Affiliate Members each season.

Affiliate Members are responsible for ensuring the Level of Play for each player follows NSSA and league policies. Affiliate members must provide players and the parents or guardians of players with information regarding the restrictions and rules on registering with multiple Affiliate Members.

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## Guest Playing

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Players shall be allowed to play as a guest on teams for other Affiliate Members for tournaments if allowed as long as they fill out the guest player form. Forms must be turned in to the Tournament Director.

Guest Player forms are not required for 3v3 or 4v4 tournament play in the State of Nebraska.

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## Club Passing/Participation on Multiple Teams

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Players shall be allowed to club pass or participate on multiple teams with their Affiliate Member. It is at the discretion of the player's parents to decide which teams they participate with. If participating with multiple teams, it is the responsibility of the club to ensure those players are following all registration requirements and league policies.

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## Registration Fees

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Players will only be charged one fee per Affiliate Member registration, no matter the number of teams they are participating with.

Any changes to the fee structure will be determined by the NSSA AGM.

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## Identification Passes

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All players and coaches registered to a youth or Adult team shall carry a Nebraska State Soccer/US Youth Soccer approved identification player/coach pass. A player/coach pass will be required to be on the sideline at any Nebraska State Soccer sanctioned league or tournament match.

Identification player/coach passes shall be furnished to the referee prior to each Nebraska State Soccer sanctioned league or tournament match.

Identification player/coach passes remain the property of the Nebraska State Soccer Association and must be produced and/or surrendered upon request of the State Referee Administrator, State Registrar, Vice president; or by a USSF registered referee while officiating a Nebraska State Soccer sanctioned league or tournament match. Referees shall note on the game card the name of any individual unable to produce an identification player/coach pass prior to a Nebraska State Soccer sanctioned league or tournament match.

Identification player/coach passes shall have a picture of the individual attached and then laminated if digital/online passes are not being utilized.

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### Youth Participation in Adult Games

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A youth player will be permitted to play an unlimited number of Adult games without losing their youth eligibility. The youth player must obtain permission from their youth coach or other authorized team official. The youth coach or other authorized team official shall in writing or by form, request eligibility clearance from the State Youth Association where they reside. The youth coach or other authorized team official must, in writing or by form, request permission of the State Adult Commissioner. When the above clearance and permissions have been granted, the State Adult Commissioner has sole discretion in permitting a youth player to play Adult games and will be responsible for establishing the procedures under which this will be implemented. In the event of a conflict between an Adult trial game and a youth game, the youth game shall take precedence.

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## 3. Competition with Affiliated and non-Affiliated Soccer Teams

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- a) **Affiliated Teams.** Competition with teams registered with this Corporation and with teams affiliated with the USSF is permitted without approval from this Corporation.
- b) **Non-affiliated Teams.** Any competition with teams not registered with Nebraska State Soccer or affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF)/US Youth Soccer must be approved by the State Office. A written or on-line request for participation in any game with such a team or teams must be made and approved by the State Office prior to the scheduled playing date. Failure to request and obtain such approval shall void all insurance offered by Nebraska State Soccer for the match against the non-affiliated team(s). (August 06)

- c) Benefit Games. This Association may participate in games with teams from other state associations and with visiting foreign teams providing that the correct procedures are observed as laid down by the USSF. The Board shall have the power to set dates in every season to stage matches for the benefit of this Association and/or some worthy cause. On such dates, all associations, leagues, clubs, and players under its jurisdiction shall be permitted to maintain their current schedule unless expressly prohibited by the Board of Directors at that time.
- d) Travel- 7U and below teams shall not be issued permission to travel out of state to USSF/USYSA sanctioned events. (June 03)
- e) NSSA Sponsored Activities and Sanctioned Tournaments. NSSA sponsored activities and/or sanctioned tournaments holding 8U and below competitions must be "friendly" in nature with no championship game played or championship award presented. All participants must receive awards if any are presented.
- f) All leagues must be sanctioned by Nebraska State Soccer.

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## 4. Referees

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Referees must be registered in accordance with USSF Rule 3033. Referees participating in games with this Corporation shall be subject to supervision and discipline by the Board of Directors of the NSSA.

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### Precedence of Affiliated Games

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USSF certified referees will, on receipt of notice (72 hours prior); accept games of affiliated teams, clubs or leagues, in lieu of previous games of non-affiliated teams, clubs, or leagues.

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### Non-Affiliated Games

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Referees duly registered and deemed qualified by the SRA and under the jurisdiction of this Corporation will not wear the USSF Referee badge/patch/insignia while officiating matches/competitions not under the jurisdiction of this Corporation.

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### Non-Registered Officiating

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No person shall officiate as a referee in any game involving any team registered with this Corporation who is not registered as a referee with this Corporation except in the case of an emergency or where otherwise authorized by the Board of Directors.

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## 5. Penalties

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All youth and adult participants will be subject to the below stated penalties.

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### Use of Illegal Player

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Use of Illegal Player. Any club or team admin which fields a player ineligible or illegal because of improper registration or deception will be subject to the following:

1. Team Admin
  - a) First Offense – forfeiture of game, a five-game suspension from any sanctioned play and up to two years’ probation.
  - b) Second and Subsequent Offense – forfeiture of game, up to a year suspension from any sanctioned play and up to two years’ probation, served consecutively.
2. Club - Any club whose team admin has a second or subsequent offense will be subject to up to a \$500 fine.
3. If the second or subsequent offense occurs while serving a current probation, the probation(s) will be served consecutively.

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### Use of a Non-Registered Player

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Use of a non-registered player will result in the following penalties.

1. Offending Team
  - a.) First Offense - forfeiture of game, fined according to league rules.
  - b.) Second and Subsequent Offense - forfeiture of game, fined according to league rules, two-game suspension from any sanctioned play and up to two years’ probation, served consecutively.
2. Club - Any club whose coach team admin has a second or subsequent offense will be subject to fines and possible suspension.

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## Non-Registered Team Admin

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For participating as a non-registered team admin, the offending team shall forfeit that game, be fined according to league rules for forfeit, and the team admin/club fined according to the penalties listed below.

### 1. Team Admin

- a) First Offense – forfeiture of game, a two-game suspension from any sanctioned play and up to two years’ probation.
- b) Second – forfeiture of game, a five-game suspension from any sanctioned play and up to two years’ probation.
- c) Subsequent Offenses - a year suspension from any sanctioned play and two years’ suspension.

### 2. Club

- a) First Offense – \$250 fine and up to two years’ probation.
- b) Second – \$500 fine up to two years’ probation.
- c) Subsequent Offenses - \$1000 fine, three years’ probation and/or possible revocation of membership.

3. If a second or subsequent offense occurs while serving a current probation, the probation will be served consecutively.

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## Printing & Use of an Illegal Pass

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- a) Printing of an Illegal Pass: Any Affiliate Member and/or any person found to have intentionally created an illegal pass or been involved in the creation of an illegal pass in any matter will be subjected to a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or up to three years’ probation or a permanent suspension from all association activities.
- b) If there is a complaint and/or investigation of a possible violation the State Office may revoke the member's privilege to print passes and will print their passes until the matter is resolved. Additional fees for printing of passes will be assessed.
- c) Use of an Illegal Pass: Any Affiliate Member and/or any person found to have used an illegal pass or been involved in the creation of an illegal pass in any matter will be subjected to a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or up to three years’ probation or a permanent suspension from all association activities.

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## Conduct Detrimental to the Good and Welfare

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Any player, team official or club officer whose conduct is considered to be detrimental to the good and welfare of soccer shall be suspended for one (1) game for the first offense and for a minimum of two (2) games for the second offense or more within a two-year period. Such misconduct shall include but shall

not be limited to misbehavior while a spectator; the frequenting, while in uniform or warm-up suit, of an area or a club house where alcoholic beverages are being served; and the consumption of alcoholic beverages in the vicinity of the playing field before, during or after a soccer game.

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### Payment of Fines/Penalties

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Barring cause under appeal, fines not paid within the time limits stipulated shall cause the delinquent organization to be declared in poor standing. Organizations in poor standing shall be ineligible to participate in further competition until the proper financial obligation has been fulfilled.

The NSSA time limit for the payment of fines shall be fourteen (14) days from the date a fine is imposed or a bond is declared forfeited.

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## 6. Grievances and Appeals

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### Procedures

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#### **Grievance & Appeals Committee**

The Grievance and Appeals Committee shall consist of the Vice-President, who shall be the chairperson of the Committee, the SRA, or their delegate and four other members to be selected by the membership (clubs, leagues, and associations). No member shall serve if their member organization is involved in the hearing. The President shall then appoint a new member for that case only.

#### **Filing**

- a) Non-game related type grievances and appeals must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the event giving rise to the grievance or appeal.
- b) Except as provided above, all grievances filed with this Corporation shall be in writing, signed by the person filing such grievance and shall be delivered or mailed to the Vice-President not less than seven days after the event giving rise to the grievance. The person filing the grievance of the Committee that participated in the decision shall have had ample opportunity to review the written report and correct any errors or omissions. After Committee members have reviewed the report, the chairman shall deliver the report to the Board of Directors. Only the President or their designate shall be responsible for forwarding copies of Committee decisions beyond the jurisdiction of the State Association.

## Decisions

- a) Unless otherwise provided herein, all grievances and appeals filed with this Corporation shall be filed with the Chairperson and shall be considered by the Committee. All decisions by the Committee shall be reported to the Board of Directors and shall constitute the decision of the Board unless such decision is modified by the Board.

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### Appeals

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**Decisions of Grievance Committee:** The decision of the Committee shall not be subject to debate or revision unless the Board of Directors, by a majority votes of the members of the Board otherwise orders. A decision of the Committee may be modified by the Board by a majority vote of the members of the Board.

**Decisions of Affiliated Leagues/Associations:** The Board of Directors shall entertain appeals from the decision of affiliated associations or leagues only after such decisions have been reconsidered or an application for reconsideration has been refused and only in cases of interpretation of rules.

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### Appeals beyond NSSA

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Any club, league or association not wholly satisfied with any decision made by this Corporation has the right of appeal by following the procedure laid down by USSF Rule 2.6.4.

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### Exclusive Jurisdiction

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Any grievance concerning any games sponsored by this Corporation shall be filed with the person designated by the Board as the game or tournament director or with the individual designated by such director as grievance assistant. If for purposes of continuing tournament or other games a decision on such grievance is necessary within forty-eight hours of the event creating the grievance, such director or grievance assistant shall be authorized to hear such grievance using such procedure as deemed best and to make a decision thereon. Grievances requiring a decision within forty-eight hours of the event causing the grievance may be presented orally to a game or tournament director or assistant and the decision of such director or assistant may be made orally. A report of all such oral grievances and decisions shall be made by the director or assistant to the Board.

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### NSSA Sponsored Games

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Any grievance concerning any games sponsored by this Corporation shall be filed with the person designated by the Board as the game or tournament director or with the individual designated by such director as grievance assistant. If for purposes of continuing tournament or other games a decision on such grievance is necessary within forty-eight hours of the event creating the grievance, such director or grievance assistant shall be authorized to hear such grievance using such procedure as deemed best and to make a decision thereon. Grievances requiring a decision within forty-eight hours of the event causing the grievance may be presented orally to a game or tournament director or assistant and the decision of such director or assistant may be made orally. A report of all such oral grievances and decisions shall be made by the director or assistant to the Board.

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## **7. Amendments**

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These Rules and Regulations may be altered, amended, or repealed and new Rules may be adopted by the Board of Directors by a majority vote.