



**MISSISSIPPI SOCCER ASSOCIATION,  
INC.  
POLICY MANUAL**

*APPROVED SEPTEMBER 12, 2020*

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1 **MISSISSIPPI SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
2 **Policy Manual**

3  
4 **PART I - GENERAL**

5  
6 **Rule 101: ESTABLISHMENT**

7  
8 **Section 1.** The following Policies are the standing rules of MSA. MSA is a member of the United  
9 States Youth Soccer MSA, Inc. (“USYSA”) and the United States Adult Soccer MSA, Inc.  
10 (“USASA”) which are both members of the United States Soccer Federation (“Federation”). The  
11 Federation is the national MSA member for the United States of the international organization  
12 FIFA and the USOC.

13  
14 **Section 2.** In the event of a conflict between the articles of incorporation and bylaws of MSA  
15 and the articles of incorporation, bylaws, policies, and requirements of the Federation, USYSA,  
16 or USASA, the articles, bylaws, policies, and requirements of the Federation govern with  
17 priority and followed by the articles, bylaws, policies, and requirements of USYSA and USASA.  
18

19 **Rule 102: AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

20  
21 **Section 1.** The policies, rules, and regulations of MSA as now established and as amended  
22 may be altered, repealed or new policies, rules, and regulations may be adopted by a majority  
23 of the council then in office and present at the meeting of the council.

24  
25 **Section 2.** Authority to establish policies, rules, regulations, and procedures by MSA, for its  
26 members, to ensure compliance with all requirements for membership shall be herein  
27 established.

28  
29 **Section 3.** The policies, rules, and regulations of MSA shall take precedence over the rules  
30 and procedures of members when there is conflict or in the absence of such rules.

31  
32 **Section 4.** Compliance with the MSA Code of Ethics for players, coaches, parents, and  
33 spectators, incorporated herein by reference, is the responsibility of all members.

34  
35 **Rule 103: MEMBER’S ESTABLISHMENT OF POLICIES, RULES, AND REGULATIONS**

36  
37 Members may enact policies, rules, and regulations more stringent than those included herein,  
38 but in no case may those policies, rules, and regulations be less stringent. However, no member  
39 organization may limit those privileges granted to players by the Federation, USYSA, USASA, or  
40 MSA.

41  
42 **Rule 104: PLEAS OF IGNORANCE**

43  
44 A plea of ignorance to the bylaws and these policies, rules, and regulations is not sufficient and  
45 violators shall expect appropriate action by the council.  
46  
47

48 **Rule 105: MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR**

49  
50 **Section 1.** Any matters not provided for in these policies, rules, and regulations shall be  
51 determined, in its sole discretion, by the council.

52  
53 **Section 2.** Any such decisions may be subject to the requirements of the MSA Bylaws or  
54 approval of the members at the AGM or at a special meeting.  
55

56 **PART II - ADMINISTRATION**

57  
58 **Rule 201: COUNCIL OPERATIONS**

59  
60 **Section 1.** The officers and directors of MSA shall not be compensated for the performance of  
61 services as an employee for MSA but may be reimbursed for expenses incurred on behalf of the  
62 MSA, including but not limited to expenses for attendance at meetings of the council.

63  
64 **Section 2.** The council shall establish and disseminate all policies, rules, and regulations  
65 regarding its obligation in Article VIII(2)(G) to establish district geographies which shall  
66 include, but not be limited to, boundaries, representation and elections, communications,  
67 and oversight,  
68

69 **Section 3.** The council may establish other administrative positions by contract if there is  
70 remuneration or by appointment for positions without remuneration. All positions shall have  
71 written statements of duties and responsibilities. Contracts shall also specify the duration of  
72 such commitments and remuneration as agreed.  
73

74 **Rule 202: BUDGET**

75  
76 **Section 1.** Budgets, income, and expenses shall be established annually as necessary for the  
77 operation of MSA.  
78

79 **Section 2.** An annual review by a certified public accountant shall be authorized of all MSA  
80 funds, which shall be a full audit on even years and an audit review on odd years.  
81

82 **Section 3.** Accountability and fiscal responsibility shall be demonstrated by MSA in the use of  
83 all funds under its authority and to assure that adequate resources are available to attain its  
84 goals to promote, support and educate for the advancement of MSA. All persons with  
85 budgetary authority shall be accountable for the expenditures of funds budgeted to their  
86 office or program.  
87

88 **Section 4.** Final approval of requests for budget funding shall be as established by MSA,  
89 approved by the council, and the annual budget subject to approval by the membership.  
90

91 **Rule 203: FEES AND FINES**

92  
93 **Section 1.** The council, subject to the approval of the membership at an AGM or a special  
94 meeting, may assess fees or require bonds for administrative functions undertaken on  
95 behalf of its members or fines in specific disciplinary actions may be levied.

96 **Section 2.** Fees shall be established, scheduled, and disseminated by MSA to provide  
97 sufficient income to support its programs and services to players, coaches, and to support  
98 the administration of MSA. Fines and penalties may also be levied.  
99

100 **Section 3.** Registration fees are required for every player and coach that registers to  
101 participate in any MSA sanctioned event or competition.  
102

103 **Section 4.** Members will complete and submit the online MSA Invoice forms for all monies  
104 submitted to MSA. All financial instruments shall be made payable to MSA and submitted as  
105 directed by MSA.

- 106 A. All fees, including those for registration, must be submitted via the MSA online  
107 system within fifteen (15) days of the start of organization competition.
- 108 B. Cities and municipalities must present payment within 30 days after presentation to  
109 the required city officials (any delay must be noted to MSA). These mailings will  
110 include an itemized accounting of player registrations by playing level using the  
111 Invoice form within the MSA Online Registration System.
- 112 C. Monthly, registrars shall generate an invoice for any registration fees accumulated  
113 and submit appropriate fees to MSA.  
114

## 115 **Rule 204: INSURANCE**

116

### 117 **Section 1. Program.**

- 118 A. This program exists to provide accidental medical coverage and liability coverage for  
119 individuals serving in various capacities. The accidental medical insurance provides  
120 secondary medical coverage only unless the injured individual is not covered by any  
121 other medical insurance. In that case, the policy provides primary coverage. In either  
122 case, the coverage is subject to the policy limitations. The liability insurance provides  
123 primary coverage subject only to the policy limitations.
- 124 B. These policies are designed to provide sound administration and management of  
125 this vital MSA Program.
- 126 C. This term of such insurance policies shall be generally briefly outlined with the  
127 complete provisions in of policies on file at MSA. In the event of any conflict the  
128 policy contracts will govern.  
129

### 130 **Section 2. Accidental Medical Insurance.**

- 131 A. Accidental medical coverage is maintained by MSA which provides coverage to  
132 registered players, registered coaches and volunteers, participating in MSA  
133 sanctioned activities at the team, club, league and state levels including MSA  
134 sanctioned tournaments and cups.
- 135 B. Coverage is afforded to all members who are properly registered as required by  
136 MSA.
- 137 C. The Accidental Medical Insurance Policy term shall be September 1 through  
138 August 31 annually.
- 139 D. Coverage is secondary coverage benefits which are payable in excess of all other  
140 valid and collectible insurance and requires a deductible.  
141  
142  
143

- 144 E. Claim Procedure:  
145 1. Claims may be denied if the listed procedures are not followed and in no  
146 case shall a claim be paid if the participant is not properly registered to  
147 MSA.  
148 2. No accident insurance claim will be honored unless it is first reviewed and  
149 approved by MSA.  
150 3. Completed claim forms, available on the MSA website, should be sent to  
151 MSA within 20 days. Bills for expenses incurred must be submitted within  
152 90 days of treatment.  
153 4. The attending physician or dentist shall complete the appropriate sections  
154 on the back of the form or the standard forms from the physician or dentist  
155 may be substituted.  
156 5. Attach all itemized bills.  
157 6. Mail any additional bills directly to the Insurance Company.  
158 7. Notice of claim and initial treatment shall be submitted by claimant to the  
159 MSA carrier within 180 days of the injury.  
160

161 **Section 2. General Liability Insurance.**

- 162 A. Comprehensive general liability coverage shall be maintained for MSA and all  
163 members.  
164 B. The named insureds for MSA coverage shall include each of its officers, directors,  
165 employees, committee members, and other persons as specified by the council.  
166 C. Member coverage includes member officers, volunteers, players, coaches, assistant  
167 coaches, and spectators.  
168 D. The policy term shall be from September 1 through August 31, annually unless  
169 otherwise determined by the council.  
170

171 **Rule 205: RISK MANAGEMENT**

172  
173 **Section 1.** The Risk Management Program shall encompass and govern the administration  
174 and implementation of MSA's risk management program to be consistent with Federation  
175 Bylaw 212(1)(7) and (3)(a)(7), its Safe Soccer program including Federation Policy 212-3, in  
176 compliance with USYSA Bylaw Article VI. Section 2, and the USYSA Risk Management Policy  
177 as of February 16, 2019.  
178

179 **Section 2.** The requirements for implementation of a risk management program are  
180 described in the Federation's Safe Soccer program and the USYSA Risk Management Policy of  
181 which MSA has adopted in compliance with the requirements of membership.  
182

183 **Section 3.** The responsibility for the oversight and administration of the Risk Management  
184 Program shall be the council which may be delegated.  
185

186 **Section 4.** As required by Federation Policy 531-1.5 and the USYSA Risk Management Policy,  
187 all referees participating with MSA shall "agree to participate in, and comply with, the risk  
188 management program" and to be subject to background checks.  
189

190 **Section 5.** Each member organization shall annually inspect all practice and game field goals.  
191 An affidavit shall be submitted to the MSA State Office online through the E-Org system

192 before play may begin. The inspection criteria shall be as provided by the Consumer Product  
193 Safety Commission (CPSC).

194  
195 **Rule 206: GAME PLAY WITH NON-MEMBERS AND EXTRA TERRITORIAL AFFILIATIONS**  
196

197 **Section 1.** Any member team or member, which plays games or otherwise does business  
198 with an organization not affiliated with the Federation, USYSA or USASA, shall face  
199 disciplinary action up to and including suspension as determined by the council. MSA will  
200 not join any organization that has requirements that conflict with the Federation's bylaws,  
201 policies, and requirements.

202  
203 **Section 2.** Teams near the territorial limits of MSA may, if the board of director's consents,  
204 member with other recognized State MSAs, but thereafter may not change affiliations  
205 without the consent of the council. A team may not change member organizations without  
206 the written agreement of both member organizations and the written approval of the  
207 council.

208  
209 **Rule 207: TOURNAMENT GAMES, ALL-STAR GAMES, AND INTERNATIONAL GAMES**  
210

211 The authority for approval, operational control, or both, including dates and times of games that  
212 are to be played for these competitions, when played or sponsored by any member team(s) or  
213 member(s), shall be vested with the council.  
214

215 **Rule 208: PERMISSION TO TRAVEL**  
216

217 Teams that wish to travel out of Mississippi to play games must notify MSA in accordance with  
218 procedures as defined. The council may establish additional requirements and fees.  
219 - Competitive level teams are not required to notify MSA of travel unless required by  
220 the Tournament/Event they are attending.  
221 - Recreational teams traveling out of state must always notify MSA.  
222 - Notifications of Travel submitted within 36 hours of event will incur a processing fee.  
223

224 **Rule 209: PERMISSION TO HOST FOREIGN AND INTERSTATE TEAMS**  
225

226 Teams that wish to host teams from another state or another country must request permission  
227 from MSA in accordance with procedures detailed by the Federation and in the USYSA Travel  
228 and Tournament Manual. The council may establish additional requirements and fees.  
229

230 **Rule 210: PERMISSION TO HOST A TOURNAMENT**  
231

232 **Section 1.** Member organizations that wish to host an MSA sanctioned tournaments must  
233 request permission from the MSA in accordance with the policies and procedures  
234 established by MSA, USYSA, USASA, and the Federation. The council may establish additional  
235 requirements. Member organizations that wish to host a sanctioned tournament shall be  
236 insured against general liability claims by MSA's insurance carrier for MSA sanctioned  
237 activities. The council may establish additional requirements and fees.  
238

239 **Section 2.** MSA may host a tournament in accordance with the policies and procedures

240 established by USYSA, USASA, and the Federation. The council may establish rules and  
241 additional requirements and fees.

242  
243 **Rule 211: OLYMPIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (ODP)**

244  
245 MSA shall participate in the Federation and USYSA Olympic Development Program through the  
246 Mississippi State Select Program. Any player domiciled in the State of Mississippi shall be eligible  
247 to tryout for ODP pursuant to requirements and procedures that will be published annually by  
248 MSA, USYSA, and the Federation.

249  
250 **Rule 212: COACHING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

251  
252 **Section 1.** Subject to the policies and procedures established by the Federation, MSA shall  
253 establish, manage, and operate coaching development programs. The council may establish  
254 additional requirements to those provided by or not covered by the Federation as may be  
255 provided in this rule.

256  
257 **Section 2.** State level coaching development is designed to provide instruction in soccer  
258 coaching for any individual regardless of coaching or playing background. The philosophy is  
259 to expose the beginner or novice to coaching and teaching methods which are economical and  
260 efficient.

261  
262 **Section 3.** Procedures for hosting courses shall be published and posted by MSA. The  
263 procedures shall provide the process for scheduling courses, course curriculum, the fee  
264 schedule, time requirements, and any other directions necessary for obtaining an MSA  
265 coaching license. The hosting procedures shall be binding on all members and participants.

266  
267 **Section 4.** Program administration shall be overseen by the council and the executive  
268 director. The Director of Coaching, as applicable, shall be responsible for all operational  
269 matters and correspondence with any member requesting a course, including but not limited  
270 to, curriculum, instructional staff, certification, and schedule.

271  
272 **Rule 213: MEMBER INFORMATION**

273  
274 **Section 1.** The information collected online by national entities is stored indefinitely at a  
275 national background checks processing company and is used for assuring the safety of our  
276 membership as outlined in the risk management policies.

277  
278 **Section 2.** Local organizations members and officers do not have access to any background  
279 check information. The members' officers with access to the password protected MSA database  
280 systems may see if the individual has completed and passed a successful background check.  
281 Individuals noted as N/A, Pending or Denied may not participate with the organization. Other  
282 than name, address and contact information, no other personal information is displayed.

283  
284 **Section 3.** Information in the risk management database is not used for mailings, list rental or  
285 any other form of sale.

286  
287 **Section 4.** MSA reserves the right to disclose personal information if required to do so by law,



288 by the request or demand from Safe Sport or the Federation, or in the good faith belief that  
289 such action is reasonably necessary to comply with legal process, respond to claims, or protect  
290 the rights, property or safety of the organization, employees, members, or the public.  
291

292 **Section 5.** When adverse information is received, the individual is contacted directly by MSA  
293 to obtain information to clear the adverse information. If the information is found to be  
294 correct, the MSA Criminal Conviction Matrix is used to determine eligibility and when the  
295 individual would become eligible. The local member president would be advised that the  
296 individual was ineligible for participation in MSA. The individual may appeal the loss of  
297 eligibility in accordance with MSA Bylaws and policy. The member is required to enforce the  
298 eligibility decision of the person involved, unless otherwise advised by the MSA.  
299

## 300 **Rule 214: MISCELLANEOUS**

301  
302 **Section 1.** Except for employees or authorized contractors and subcontractors, no private  
303 individual, corporation, contributor, or member of MSA may be granted or paid any income or  
304 interest from the assets or funds of MSA.  
305

306 **Section 2.** No part of the activities, assets, or funds of MSA shall be committed to the  
307 dissemination of propaganda or the attempting to influence legislation or other political action.  
308 MSA shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign or publish or distribute any  
309 statement or spend any funds on behalf of any candidate for public office.  
310

311 **Section 3.** The accomplishment of its purpose and exercise of its powers by MSA shall be in  
312 conformity with the requirements of the Mississippi Not for Profit Corporation Act.  
313

314 **Section 4.** MSA shall maintain its tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code.  
315

## 316 **PART III – REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION**

### 317 **Rule 301: DEFINITIONS**

318  
319  
320 **Section 1.** By reference, all definitions included in the USYSA Policies on Players and Playing  
321 Rules, Rule 101. Sections (1) and (2) and the USASA Player Registration Policy apply.  
322

323 **Section 2.** The following definitions also apply to this part:

- 324 A. **Club Pass play:** the act of participating with an MSA team in an MSA or USYSA  
325 sanctioned events by an age eligible player rostered to another team in the same  
326 member.  
327 B. **Dual rostering:** the action of being rostered to more than one team simultaneously. See  
328 Rule 303.Section 6.  
329 C. **Event Roster:** A roster created for an event, such as a league or tournament that is used  
330 only in that event and has been created from the team’s official state roster and  
331 approved guest player forms.  
332 D. **Guest playing:** the act of participating in an MSA sanctioned event when the player  
333 appears on the official roster of another team.  
334 E. **Official Roster:** The computer-generated roster from the MSA secure site in printout  
335 form.

- 336 F. **Registration:** Shall be defined as the act of registering a player or coach with MSA.  
337 G. **Release:**  
338 1. Voluntary release shall be defined as the process of removing a player or  
339 coach from a team roster at the written request of the player or coach.  
340 2. Involuntary release shall be defined as the process of removing a player or  
341 coach without written permission of the player or coach.  
342 3. Any released player may not be assigned to another team for the remainder  
343 of the seasonal year.  
344 H. **Rostering:** Shall be defined as the act of placing a registered player or coach on a team  
345 roster as may be defined by the rules of competition for a MSA sanctioned competition  
346 or event.  
347 I. **Transfer:** Shall be defined as the release and removal of a player's primary roster with  
348 the intention of being added to another member and the roster of another team on  
349 acceptance of the request by MSA.  
350

## 351 **Rule 302. PLAYER REGISTRATION**

352

353 **Section 1.** A player is obligated to their team for the seasonal year from the time they sign a  
354 contract or are rostered to a team until the end of the current seasonal year unless otherwise  
355 provided.  
356

### 357 **Section 2.** Registration Procedure.

- 358 A. Eligible individuals must register through a member organization, be domiciled in the  
359 State of Mississippi, and meet the established age requirements for program  
360 participation.  
361 B. Member organizations are required to verify the birth date of each player via birth  
362 certificate, passport, driver's license documents, or any other document accepted by  
363 USYS/USSF. Verification of birth dates should be noted within the MSA online  
364 registration software.  
365 C. Registration of players, coaches and team officials is required for any MSA sanctioned  
366 or sponsored event. All registered players, coaches, and team officials must comply with  
367 applicable rules, policies and procedures to be eligible to compete.  
368 D. Members shall register all players, coaches, and team/club officials **prior** to any  
369 participation in the game of soccer, including but not limited to, practice, scrimmages,  
370 and all competitions in which the player or coach participates except for properly  
371 announced tryouts. The registration requirement shall in no way be construed as an  
372 extension to or a waiver to the submission deadlines as required by the rules of specific  
373 competitions.  
374 E. Registration fees must be submitted in a timely fashion according to MSA rules. Due  
375 dates will be noted on any player fee invoice generated by MSA.  
376 F. An eligible youth player may register with MSA for: (1) the sole purpose of allowing the  
377 player to participate on an Adult level team without losing their youth eligibility. (2)  
378 participation in the Mississippi State Select Program (ODP) without participating on a  
379 member organization's team. (3) playing occasionally as a guest player with existing  
380 member teams without being obligated to an organization. Player(s) must pay the  
381 applicable registration fee for the highest level in which h/she wishes to play.  
382 G. Members in good standing may begin conducting player trials (try-outs) for the next  
383 seasonal year on the Monday following the originally scheduled date of the completion

384 of the MSA Premier Cup Championship Tournament.

385  
386 **Section 3.** Proof of registration in the form of a current laminated pass recognized by MSA or  
387 an official MSA generated roster shall be required for any MSA sanctioned out of region play,  
388 tournament, or Cup play including all non-league games.

389  
390 **Section 4.** Players or teams who participate with unregistered players or engage in  
391 unsanctioned play shall have no benefits of membership with MSA including, but not limited  
392 to, risk management, disciplinary or insurance protection while playing with unregistered  
393 players or in unsanctioned play.

394  
395 **Section 5.** MSA applies Federation Policy 601-6 and the USYSA Policies on Players and Playing  
396 Rules, Rule 207 regarding foreign and out-of- state players.

397 1. MSA exceptions for out-of-state players:

- 398 i. A resident of another state who attends a boarding school, college, or  
399 university located in Mississippi may register with the appropriate  
400 member organization, as determined by MSA policies for the  
401 appropriate playing level and age group.  
402 ii. A resident of another state may register with an MSA member  
403 organization if h/she receives written permission from the USYS State  
404 Association in which they are domiciled. These permissions must be  
405 obtained and approved by both parties prior to player registration with  
406 MSA member. Permission is obtained by completing the MSA Request  
407 for Interstate Transfer.

408  
409 **Section 6.** Specific procedures may be revised, published as necessary, and shall be  
410 communicated to members as appropriate.

411  
412 **Section 7.** MSA may permit variances to these requirements as provided by USYSA Policy on  
413 Players and Playing Rules, Rule 105 specifically as it applies to players with special needs.

### 414 **Rule 303: ROSTERING**

415  
416  
417 **Section 1.** All players must be rostered to a team in order to compete in MSA sanctioned  
418 activities. Any player participating in any competition shall be considered immediately  
419 rostered to that team.

420  
421 **Section 2.** A player is rostered to a team when the rostering process is completed or as defined  
422 by MSA. All matters of dispute shall be governed by the Official Roster. A copy of the Official  
423 Roster is valid for all events requiring a roster.

424  
425 **Section 3.** A coach is rostered to a team when the rostering process below is complete.

- 426 A. Properly registered within member organization  
427 B. Current photo in profile account of registration software  
428 C. Kidsafe affidavit submitted and approved  
429 D. SafeSport training completed and/or renewed  
430 E. Heads Up Concussion Awareness training completed  
431 F. Licensed properly in accordance with MSA guidelines

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**Section 4.** MSA sanctioned competitions (state league play and Competitive tournaments) may adopt rules to allow the use of Club Pass players up to the maximum roster size:

- A. U13 – U19 Competitive teams: Total roster size, including club pass players, is limited to twenty-two (22) players. Teams shall name eighteen (18) eligible players for each game.
- B. U11 – U12 Competitive teams: Total roster size, including club pass players, is limited to fourteen (14) players.
- C. A club pass player may only participate with one (1) team per event.
- D. Recreational players may club pass to a Competitive team but not to another Recreational team.

**Section 5.** Leagues and tournaments may create event rosters for internal use allowing properly registered players to participate within their rules of competition without changing the Official Roster.

**Section 6.** Event Rosters must list the player’s full name, pass number, rostered team, date of birth, and birth verification status. Prior to the use of these rosters for inter-club games, leagues, and tournaments, the member must have on file the team’s official roster with appropriate guest player forms or an Event Roster, as verification of players’ credentials and that guest players have proper permission to participate.

**Section 7.** Dual Rostering is permitted, and a player may be rostered to multiple teams at one time during a seasonal year with the applicable conditions:

- A. A player is eligible for State Cup as subject to the USYSA NCS rules.
- B. The team schedule on which the player is officially rostered takes precedence in all issues or conflicts.
- C. No player may play on two (2) teams during the same event.

**Section 8.** Event rosters for all competitions shall be the official roster unless otherwise specified.

**Section 9.** Simultaneous rostering for MSA sanctioned competitions is not permitted unless otherwise specified.

### **Rule 304: ELIGIBILITY, TRANSFERS, AND RELEASES**

**Section 1. Player eligibility to compete shall be determined as follows:**

- A. Registration with MSA has been completed and is accurate.
- B. Proper birth documentation has been submitted and verified.
- C. Player is properly rostered (as per the rules of competition) to the team with which they intend to compete.
- D. Member requirements for registration comply.
- E. Remains on team, or with the member, to which they are registered and rostered for the seasonal year unless properly released or transferred.

**Section 2. Team eligibility to compete is determined as follows:**

- A. All players properly registered with MSA.
- B. All players are properly rostered to the team as may be defined by the rules of

- 481 competition.
- 482 C. Coaches and Team Officials properly registered with MSA and rostered to the team as
- 483 may be defined by the rules of competition.
- 484 D. Associated with a Member and must continue for the seasonal year, including that no
- 485 team in its entirety or majority may move to another Member during the seasonal
- 486 year.
- 487 E. Participating in a qualified age group.
- 488 F. Recreational teams must be properly age balanced. The composition of recreational
- 489 teams each seasonal year must be adjusted to ensure a competitive balance between all
- 490 teams routinely playing against each other in a member's recreational program.
- 491 **Player age variance on each team is required:**
- 492 i. The assignment distribution from the upper-half of the age/gender group
- 493 should not exceed the organization's total distribution of the upper-half age
- 494 group players by more than fifteen (15) percent.
- 495 ii. The only acceptable exception is during spring registration for those
- 496 members with fall and spring seasons. If age balanced teams cannot be
- 497 attained due to players not returning and the addition of new players during
- 498 spring registration, the member registrar **must** notify the MSA State
- 499 Registrar prior to making changes to fall rosters.
- 500 G. Improper registration of any team member shall result in the team forfeiting all games
- 501 the improperly registered player or players participated. An improperly registered
- 502 player includes a player who is over-age, not registered to MSA, improperly entered
- 503 on the team roster, or all of these.
- 504

### 505 **Section 3. Releases and Transfers.**

- 506 A. A player under the age of 18 may request, in writing, to be released from a team roster
- 507 or from a member with approval of a parent or guardian. The member may grant the
- 508 request. Upon release, the player is ineligible for the remainder of the seasonal year.
- 509 B. Permanent internal movement (within a member organization) of a rostered player to
- 510 another team requires a Request for Transfer, submitted by a parent or guardian, with
- 511 club approval.
- 512 C. A player transferring in any MSA playing level must receive MSA approval at least
- 513 fourteen (14) days prior to the first date of player participation on the new team for
- 514 MSA Sponsored Tournaments or MSA League Play. The player may play within their
- 515 own league for the purposes of their own intra league play after seven (7) days.
- 516 D. Previously rostered players on a Competitive team may not participate in league
- 517 games within fourteen (14) days of being transferred onto the team.
- 518 E. Recreational or previously non-rostered players added to a Competitive team may
- 519 participate in league play irrespective of the 14 day wait period.
- 520 F. The only exception to this will be a legitimate Hardship Transfer request for
- 521 Recreation, approved by MSA, in the MSA Recreation Cup Championship Rounds.
- 522 G. Recreational teams participating in the MSA District and/or Recreational State Cup
- 523 are limited to transfers as follows prior to District Tournament roster freeze date:
- 524 1. 7v7 format: maximum of 3 transfers
- 525 2. 9v9 format: maximum of 4 transfers
- 526 3. 11v11 format: maximum of 5 transfers
- 527 H. For the MSA Elite Cup: Based on the format of play, the maximum of properly executed
- 528 transfers allowed prior to roster freeze date established is no more than 50% +1 of the
- 529 maximum roster size.

- 530 1. Any team executing more than 5 transfers during a seasonal year will  
531 automatically be placed in the Gold Division of the Elite Cup, where  
532 applicable.
- 533 I. Competitive Premier teams participating in the USYS leagues, MSA State League  
534 and/or MSA Premier Cup shall be limited to a total of five (5) transferred players per  
535 seasonal year. All transfers must be prior to the Premier Cup roster freeze date.
- 536 **J. A player shall always be limited to a total of one (1) transfer per seasonal year.**
- 537 K. Player Transfers are permanent for the seasonal year. The player also becomes the  
538 permanent player resource for the gaining team's member until the transferred  
539 player decides to discontinue play with the controlling member.
- 540 L. The Controlling Organization's policy controls the permissibility of eligible player  
541 transfers from a lower age group to a higher age group. MSA controls the  
542 permissibility of eligible player transfers from a higher age group to a lower age  
543 group.
- 544 M. Any Registered and Rostered Player, who fails to receive a response to the request for  
545 transfer from their current organization within seventy-two (72) hours of their  
546 documented request, shall be transferred directly by MSA according to MSA policy.  
547

### 548 **Rule 305: AGE AND PLAYER CLASSES**

549  
550 **Section 1.** Age groups and all requirements shall be established by MSA as per Federation,  
551 USYSA, and USASA requirements for all levels of play.

552  
553 **Section 2.** A player must have attained their third (3<sup>rd</sup>) birthday.  
554

555 **Section 3.** Players attaining the limited age for any age group on or after January 1 will be  
556 eligible to play for the full seasonal year.  
557

558 **Section 4.** Proof of age, per USYSA requirements, shall consist of a birth certificate, passport,  
559 driver's license, board of health records, certificate of naturalization, or alien registration  
560 card shall be sufficient for proof of age, except in those competitions which specifically state  
561 otherwise.  
562

563 **Section 5.** A player may play in an older age group, subject to competition rules, if that player  
564 is capable both physically and developmentally and subject to any other requirements.  
565

#### 566 **Section 6. Player Classes.**

- 567 A. A Competitive player shall be defined as a player who has been selected, registered  
568 and rostered to a Competitive team and will receive a USYSA pass when verified. All  
569 players will be considered competitive unless otherwise provided.
- 570 B. A recreational player shall be defined as a player who is registered and rostered to a  
571 recreation team as defined by USYSA and MSA and participating in an in-house or  
572 MSA-approved recreational league as defined.
- 573 C. A Rec-Plus player shall be defined as a recreational player who is registered and  
574 rostered to a recreation team as defined by USYS and MSA and selected to participate  
575 on a Rec-Plus team for the controlling organization. All Rec-Plus players must have a  
576 USYSA pass prior to competing in any USYSA/MSA sanctioned event.
- 577 D. TOPSoccer Programs

- 578 1. MSA will sanction and register those players in the TOPSoccer Program or  
579 other programs of this nature as designated by the council.  
580

581 **Rule 306: ADULT AND AMATEUR GAMES**

582  
583 **Section 1.** MSA encourages players to seek all opportunities for development including adult  
584 and amateur games.  
585

586 **Section 2.** An eligible youth player may register with MSA for the sole purpose of allowing the  
587 player to participate on an Adult Level team without losing their youth eligibility or  
588 participating in the Mississippi State Select Program (ODP) without participating on a member  
589 organization's team. A player who does not wish to be obligated to an organization, may  
590 register directly with MSA for the purposes of playing occasionally as a guest with existing  
591 MSA teams. This player must pay the applicable registration fees for the highest level of play.  
592

593 **PART IV: DISCIPLINE**

594  
595 **Rule 401: DEFINITIONS**

596  
597 **Section 1.** By reference, all definitions included in Federation Bylaw 701 and Policy 701-1  
598 apply.  
599

600 **Section 2.** The following definitions also apply to this part:

- 601 A. **Appeal:** is a formal method of requesting a reversal of a decision or ruling made by an  
602 authority within MSA. It may be filed by any individual, club, league, officer,  
603 administrator, or member who has been directly affected by that ruling and which  
604 person affected and filed by the person against whom a decision has been made.  
605 B. **Charge:** is a formal method of filing a claim against an individual, Member, or member  
606 of MSA regarding the violation of any Federation, USYSA, or MSA requirement.  
607 C. **Due Process:** is all procedures contained within this section and shall guarantee any  
608 individual, Member, player, coach, official or administrator of MSA or any Member the  
609 right to exercise these procedures including the right to know what charges have been  
610 made against a person and the right to a hearing before the imposition of any sanction  
611 whatsoever, including suspension, for any period of time, unless otherwise provided by  
612 the Federation, USYSA, or MSA.  
613 D. **Grievance:** disputes between two or more members of MSA as provided in Article XI of  
614 the MSA Bylaws.  
615 E. **Protest:** is a formal method that challenges the results of an event and is subject to the  
616 rules of a competition.  
617

618 **Rule 402: RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISCIPLINE**

619  
620 **Section 1.** In general, the members shall be responsible for governing those participants who  
621 are part of the organization and shall establish procedures to that effect. A member may adopt  
622 more stringent penalties, which shall prevail, but in no event may penalties be less. However, it  
623 is the duty of all members, their leaders, coaches, referees, and assistant referees to report  
624 immediately any infraction of "*Misconduct Toward Game Officials*" and "*Misconduct of Game*  
625 *Officials*" as required by Federation Policy 531-9 and 531-10.

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**Section 2.** All members shall provide procedures for discipline, protest and appeals for their members. All grievances involving the right to participate and compete in activities sponsored by the Federation and MSA and its members may be appealed to the Federation’s appeal committee that shall have jurisdiction to approve, modify, or reverse a decision. All hearings shall comply with Federation Bylaw 701 and Policy 701-1.

**Section 3.** Should any person, team or member want to appeal any decision, the line of authority shall be from the member to MSA and then to the line of authority as specified by United States Soccer Federation.

**Rule 403: DISCIPLINE AND APPEAL FILING PROCEDURE**

**Section 1.** The MSA Disciplinary and Appeals Committee shall only hear appeals from decisions of lower authority, cases concerning referee abuse or assault, or matters referred by the council.

**Section 2.** The line of authority for an appeal is follows:

- A. Member.
- B. MSA Disciplinary and Appeals Committee.
- C. The authority as specified by the Federation.

**Section 3.** Appeals must be in writing, either on forms specified by the MSA or providing the information requested on such forms and describes in detail the grounds for the appeal.

**Section 4.** The written appeal must be mailed within ten (10) days of the receipt of a written decision from a lower authority and must be accompanied by all supporting documents and by a fee as prescribe by the council.

**Section 5.** The appeal fee paid by the prevailing party will be returned; however, the fee shall not be returned if the appeal is denied.

**Section 6.** The party responsible for hearing appeals may decline a hearing as follows:

- A. The appeal does not pertain to the original protest or the decision of a lower authority;  
or
- B. The appeal is filed by a party other than the original parties to the appeal or protest.

**Section 7.** At all levels of the appeals process, if a decision is not reached within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written appeal, the party filing the appeal may submit the appeal to the next higher level and the appeal fee submitted will be applied to the next level.

**Section 8.** All decisions at all levels of the appeal process shall stand and be in full force and effect until and unless modified by a higher authority.

**Section 9.** Decisions of the MSA Disciplinary and Appeals Committee shall be binding unless a decision is overturned by a higher authority. Failure to abide by decisions of the committee shall be grounds for further disciplinary action by the MSA council.



674           DEFINITIONS

675  
676   The following definitions also apply to MSA Programs.

677  
678   **Appeal:** a formal method of requesting a reversal of any decision or ruling made by an authority  
679   within MSA.

680  
681   **Birth Verification:** proper birth documentation for the player has been submitted to MSA.

682  
683   **Competition:** any competition which has league or tournament standings which can be affected  
684   by both a player's primary and secondary registered teams.

685  
686   **Council:** shall be as provided in Article VIII of the MSA Bylaws.

687  
688   **Cups:** any MSA and USYSA sponsored tournaments.

689  
690   **Controlling Organization:** the MSA member organization in which a player is registered and  
691   rostered in during the seasonal year as a result of seasonal registration or a player transfer.

692  
693   **Disbanded Team:** a team which cannot consistently start the maximum number of field players in  
694   local league play due to parental and/or player disinterest. As a result, the coach, players, and local  
695   member officials mutually request MSA State Registrar along with appropriate District Director  
696   for approval to disband the team for the remainder of the seasonal year and to reassign any team  
697   players, desiring to continue playing soccer with other local teams, in accordance with established  
698   MSA policies. Team disbanding must be finalized 60 days prior to the MSA sponsored District,  
699   Elite Cup, and/or Premier Cup events.

700  
701   **District:** A geographical sub-division of the territory of MSA.

702  
703   **Domicile Requirements:** the address of the dwelling at which the player resides shall be deemed  
704   the player's domicile. P.O. Boxes may be used for mailing purposes only but will not suffice as a  
705   domicile address. A player shall NOT be considered registered unless a domicile address is  
706   included in the address field of the MSA registration software.

707  
708   **Dummy Roster (Recreation only):** a roster for registered player(s) where roster limits have  
709   been met on a team, but a second team would not meet the minimum required number of players.  
710   Player(s) on a dummy roster may participate in regular season play prior to MSA roster freeze  
711   dates.

712  
713   **Eligibility Roster:** a roster for a non-playing team which may have as few as one (1) player for the  
714   sole purposes of either an adult program participant maintaining their youth eligibility or an  
715   eligible youth registering with the USYSA to participate only in its Olympic Development Program.

716  
717   **Eligible Youths:** individuals who meet the established USYSA birth-date criteria for each  
718   age/gender group and who either are a player resource of the member organization due to  
719   previous registration or an approved player transfer.

722 **Exhibition Games:** games played with visiting teams from another state or National Youth  
723 Association for promotion purposes. Pick-up games are not Exhibition Games.

724  
725 **Hardship Transfer (Recreation Teams only):** an MSA-approved transfer to restore a team's  
726 strength back to the maximum number of players allowed on the field at one time plus two (2)  
727 substitutes. The transferred player or players must be a registered in the member organization.  
728 The team must remain age balanced according to MSA policy.

729  
730 **Event Roster:** A roster created by an event, such as a league or tournament that is used only in  
731 that event and has been created from data obtained from the team's official state roster and  
732 approved guest player forms.

733  
734 **FIFA:** Federation International de Football MSA, the worldwide governing body of the sport of  
735 soccer.

736  
737 **Frozen Roster:** Any roster that is frozen mandates that there can be no movements either off of  
738 or onto until either the team is eliminated from the specific competition or the completion of the  
739 competition under which the roster is frozen. Season ending injuries cannot be replaced once the  
740 roster is frozen. Any changes to the roster will result in the team being disqualified from the  
741 specific competition.

742  
743 **Game Roster:** A list of players who will participate in a competition.

744  
745 **Guest Player:** A registered player participating in a competition for a team to which the player is  
746 not rostered.

747  
748 **Ineligible Player:** Any youth who is unregistered, suspended, overage, or not a properly rostered  
749 member of the team(s) competing.

750  
751 **Involuntary Release:** The removal of a player from a team's roster at the request of team  
752 authorities.

753  
754 **League:** A structured group of four (4) or more teams joined for the purposes of inter-team play  
755 under a common set of administrative and Competitive rules.

756  
757 **MSA Official:** Officers, Directors, Committee Members or anyone authorized to represent MSA in  
758 any capacity.

759  
760 **Non-Player:** Coach, Assistant Coach, Manager, or any other person assisting the team; a spectator.

761  
762 **Player:** A youth properly registered in accordance with the rules of the Federation, USYSA,  
763 USASA, and the MSA rules.

764  
765 **Previously Rostered Player:** Any player who has been rostered to another team during the same  
766 seasonal year in any fashion.

767  
768 **Protest:** A formal method to question and request reversal of an event.

769

770 **Recreational League:** An intra-club league in which use of try-outs, invitations, recruiting or any  
771 like process to roster players selectively to any team based on talent or ability is prohibited.  
772 Accepts any and all youths (subject to reasonable of registration); system of rostering players is  
773 employed for the purpose of creating a fair or balanced distribution of playing teams.  
774

775 **Recreational Team:** A team in which the use of try-outs, recruiting or any like process to roster  
776 players selectively on the basis of talent or ability is strictly prohibited.  
777

778 **Referee:** All currently registered Federation referees, assistant referees, 4th official or others  
779 duly appointed to assist in officiating in a match. Also, any non-registered person serving in an  
780 emergency capacity as a referee, a club linesman.  
781

782 **Registration:** The signing of an intent to play the sport of soccer and the paying of fees or  
783 acceptance of a scholarship to become a member of USYSA and MSA.  
784

785 **Rostering:** The assignment of a registered player to a team.  
786

787 **Team Roster:** A list of registered players eligible to play for a team.  
788

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793 ***Drafting Notes:***

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1. Code of Conduct is recommended to be a separate document that is highlighted.
2. All program and event policies are recommended to exist separately for those that participate.
3. Deference is provided to the Council as the final authority when ambiguities of policy and rule application are present.
4. Any time it is possible, reference and deferral is made to national organizations and the Federation.
5. Referee abuse and assault are specific violations in the Federation policies and thus are best covered by reference to those requirements.