

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility. Membership in MSA is open to all youth and adult soccer organizations, as well as soccer players, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators, and officials who are committed to advancing soccer in Mississippi. Applications are accepted without discrimination based on race, color, religion, age, sex, or national origin.

Section 2. Authority.

- A. The governing authority of MSA is vested in the Membership and the council as provided in these Bylaws.
- B. Each member organization or individual shall recognize the authority, rulings, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Policies, Rules and Regulations of MSA, USASA, USYSA, and the Federation.

Section 3. Categories. MSA shall have the following membership categories:

- A. **Full Members.** Full Members are voting members of MSA domiciled and operating within the legal boundaries of the State of Mississippi. Only soccer organizations, including but not limited to clubs, leagues, or associations that directly register players, form teams, and coordinate competition between teams, are eligible.
- B. **Associate Members.** Associate Members are voting members of MSA formed to advance a specific aspect of soccer, subject to all requirements in Section 4 of this Article. Associate membership categories include:
 - 1. Recreational
 - 2. Rec Plus
 - 3. Competitive
 - 4. Adult
 - 5. TOPSoccer
- C. **Affiliate Members.** An individual or organization not fitting a membership category as provided by this Article may become an affiliate member of MSA upon completing an affiliate member application form, paying the membership fee to MSA, and complying with the requirements established by the council.

Section 4. Admission to Membership.

- A. Membership in MSA is open to organizations or individuals committed to advancing soccer in Mississippi and may be obtained through application.
- B. The council of MSA will determine all requirements for membership in MSA.
- C. An organization seeking membership in MSA must submit a written application to the Executive Director for approval, as outlined in Section 4 of Article III, including the following:
 - 1. the membership category being applied for; and
 - 2. copies of the organization's charter, articles of incorporation, bylaws, rules, regulations, rules of play, and any other governing documents necessary to understand its structure and activities.
- D. Membership may be granted by the council as follows:
 - 1. The council may grant to, deny or withdraw provisional membership.
 - 2. An applicant granted provisional membership assumes all rights and responsibilities associated with that membership category, except for voting privileges.
 - 3. Membership may be granted after one (1) year, or earlier, at the discretion of the council or upon the Executive Director's determination, as requested by the council, that the

applicant has fulfilled all requirements outlined in Section 4C of this Article and all other MSA requirements.

Section 5. Territories. Each full member shall operate within an MSA-approved boundary, defined by physical features (e.g., rivers, highways).

1. Boundary Guidelines: MSA boundaries are intended to aid effective administration and service delivery.
2. Shared Access and Overlap: The council may authorize overlapping territories if it supports expanded access or community needs.
3. Boundary Adjustments: Members may submit requests for boundary changes, subject to council approval.
4. Development Zones: MSA may establish “Development Zones” allowing multiple members to operate in areas identified for growth.

Section 6. Good Standing. Membership lasts for one seasonal year. If a member is admitted before the next seasonal year begins, their initial term covers the remainder of the current seasonal year. Membership automatically renews each year, provided the member remains in good standing with MSA, which includes:

1. Must be current with all dues, fees, and assessments owed;
2. Must have on file with MSA a copy of the member’s Articles or Certificate of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and any amendments to those documents;
3. Must register all players, referees, coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, organization officers, directors, and any other individuals in a timely manner as set by the Council.
4. Must follow all other such rules or procedures as the council may direct.
5. If a member fails to meet any of these qualifications, the council may suspend, fine, terminate or impose any other penalty on the member subject to the provisions of these bylaws.

Section 7. Reinstatement. A suspended member of MSA may submit a written request for reinstatement. The council may reinstate the member on terms it deems reasonable and appropriate.

Section 8. Resignation. Any member may resign by submitting written notice to the Council. The resignation takes effect immediately unless a later date is specified in the notice. Acceptance of the resignation is not required for it to become effective.