



# POLICIES

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**MEMBERSHIP**

A. Every team is obligated to send a representative to each general meeting. Any team who fails to attend the general meetings shall be liable for fines, as set forth in the Buffalo and District Soccer League (BDSL) Policies, and additional sanctions as the Board deems necessary.

B. The Board of Directors shall identify a fee structure that will be determined on a yearly basis and presented to the team managers no less than one month prior to forthcoming season.

**LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

A. The league may choose to recognize individuals for extraordinary dedication and service to soccer in general and to the league in particular, by election to life membership in the league. To be elected to life membership in the league, a candidate must be nominated by the Board of Directors and receive two-thirds (2/3) of the votes present at the February meeting after nomination. The Board of Directors may nominate only one (1) candidate in a given year. No more than five (5) individuals shall be elected to life membership in the league in any ten (10) year interval commencing in 1990.

B. Any person who has served seven (7) years in the capacity of secretary in the league shall automatically become a life member in the league.

C. Life members of the league shall have one (1) vote, but only one (1) vote, at all league meetings regardless of their status as delegate for a specific team or club. Life members of the league may be elected or appointed to any office in the normal manner described in this Constitution and Policies.

D. If more than one (1) life member is available to serve as life member on the Board of Directors, the life members shall decide among themselves upon a rotation for serving in one (1) year terms commencing at each annual general meeting. If the life members cannot agree among themselves upon a rotation for serving as life members on the Board of Directors, the elected directors shall establish a rotation based on seniority of election to life membership where each life member has the opportunity to serve for at least one full year as life member on the Board of Directors before another serves twice.

E. Life members shall be listed in Appendix A

**LEAGUE DIVISIONS**

A. The Board of Directors shall determine the number of divisions within the league and playing format in these divisions based on the number of teams, past performances of the teams or clubs, or other information available to the Board of Directors.

B. The top two (2) teams in each division shall move up one division and the bottom two (2) teams shall move down one division, an exception will be made to balance the number of teams in the divisions as deemed necessary by the Board. The Board may also create a division where promotion and relegation do not occur.

C. If an opening occurs, the following guidelines will be followed. A returning team who is interested in moving up into a higher division must submit a written request. The team must have achieved a winning record and finished no lower than 5th place in their current division. Such requests will be granted at the discretion of the Board. A new team must submit a written statement as to why they wish to enter the league in the Premier or First Division. This written statement must give specifics as to why this team should be considered. Petitions will only be considered if there is an opening. All petitions must be received no later than the February league meeting. Preference will be given to existing teams.

D. All new teams will start in the lowest division as determined by the Board.

**PLAYING SCHEDULE**

- A. The playing season shall run as scheduled. League games or league sponsored cup games shall not be played after the final day of the league season.
- B. A schedule of games to be played in each division shall be drawn up by the Board of Directors or their designee at least two (2) weeks before the start of the season. After each schedule has been approved at a league meeting, no changes shall be made without the specific approval of the President or his/her designee.
- C. In order to reschedule a game after the schedule has been approved by the league, teams must contact the Referee Assignor and a Board member three days prior to the original date. The teams must have a new date already agreed upon or the scheduler will set a date and the game will be played. No team shall reschedule more than two (2) games per season.
- D. Any teams from the same club in the same division shall play each other the first game of the season.
- E. All scheduled league games must be played.

**PLAYER REGISTRATION**

- A. Every player participating in a league or league-sponsored cup game must be a member of a registered team and must be registered on an annual basis with the Buffalo and District Soccer League and the Western New York Soccer Association.
- B. Players may be amateur or professional. There shall be no objection to amateurs playing with or against professionals, and the rules and regulations governing them shall be the United States Soccer Federation. No club may have more than two (2) professional players registered. Any club found guilty of this rule will be subject to punishment.
- C. No team shall be permitted to have more than twenty-two (22) or less than eleven (11) registered playing members at any time. Only eighteen (18) players may be dressed for any game.
- D. Every registered player will receive a player pass and will pay the appropriate State Association and BDSL fees.
- E. Players shall be registered at least seven (7) days prior to any League or Cup game, posted or handed to the league registrar with the appropriate fee. The registration date is defined as the day that the documentation and the fees are received and dated by the registrar.
- F. It shall be an offense for any reason to fraudulently register any player. If such an act is committed, the player shall be declared invalid and the player, as well as the person registering the player, may be penalized as the league deems fit.
- G. All documentation for registration must be accompanied by the fee. A transferred or released player is not eligible to play for a new club until (1) the expiration of ten (10) days from the postmarked date of his release or transfer and (2) the transfer fee is paid.
- H. Any team playing an unregistered player in a league or league sponsored cup game shall be declared the loser and fined as a forfeit. The opponents shall be awarded three (3) points for the game victory. In the case of a cup competition, the offending team shall be eliminated from the competition and, if possible, the team losing the prior cup game with the offending team shall be reinstated in the competition. Other penalties may be assessed, pending Board inquiry.

**PLAYER PASSES**

A. Player passes are mandatory for all players. Each player must provide one (1) passport-size photo, front view, for the player pass. After photographs have been attached and all the particulars filled in, passes must accompany regular registration forms to the registrar to be certified. A player shall not participate in any scheduled games without possessing his certified player pass.

B. In case of release or transfer of a player, the player's old team shall give the player his pass and said pass must accompany re-registration of his new team.

C. In no case shall a player participate without a pass unless authorized by BDSL Board member or the registrar. If a player is found to have participated in any league or league sponsored cup game without his pass or with a fraudulent pass, the player shall be suspended for at least one (1) game. The club or team playing such a player shall be subject to punishment.

D. In case of the loss of a player pass, there will be a fine for reissuing the pass.

**PLAYER TRANSFERS AND RELEASES**

A. All players remain property of the team last played for until such time as they are given their release or pass to play with some other team. If within a period of one (1) month of league commencement, player is not signed by team, his release is automatically granted and the team must surrender his player pass or pay of renewal pass.

B. A player shall not sign a second registration form for any other team until properly released by his old team, and a record of said release is filed with the league. An infringement of this rule shall bring a fine set forth by the BDSL Board of Directors to the team guilty of the offense and the player shall be suspended.

C. Players may be transferred from one team to another or have registration canceled after applying to the team and state association registrar. Subsequent to the request, if said transfer of release is not granted within ten (10) days, the player may request said transfer of release from the State Association and said release shall be granted providing the player is not in possession of any property belonging to the former team. Any team which withholds release of transfer maliciously shall be subject to a fine set forth by the Board.

D. Players desiring their releases to play in Canada must be released by their teams to the State Association so stating their approval before releases will be granted and sent to the Canadian Football Association.

E. No Premier Division player is eligible to play or be transferred to any other division team after his team has completed its division league or cup games.

F. As per USSF Rule 116(1)(d) release fee for players will be upheld and enforced.

G. All applications for release of player must be accompanied with the player pass. Failure to send player pass with request for release will result in denial of release. If player pass is lost for a released player, it must be so stated. Also, if former pass is completely filled out it must be returned to the registrar. A new pass must accompany request. This applies only in the case of release of players and/or transfer of players. In the case of a player requesting his release or transfer and it being granted after the seven (7) day waiting period, the former team must return his pass to the registrar immediately and if lost, must state so. Any team which withholds said pass shall be subject to a fine.

H. Registration, transfer and release of players not covered in these rules shall be governed by the registration rules of the N.W.N.Y.S.S.F.A.

I. Individual players are allowed one transfer per season.

**TEAM COLORS**

A. All team jerseys shall be alike and numbered with no two (2) jerseys having the same number. These numbers must be a minimum of four (4) inches in height and permanent in nature. There will be a fine determined by the BDSL for a violation of this rule.

B. In the case of a uniform color conflict, unacceptable to the referee, it is the obligation of the home team to change colors.

**MANAGER/COACH RESPONSIBILITIES PLAYER AND TEAM CONDUCT**

A. Every club and team is responsible for the actions of its players, officers and spectators, and is required to take all necessary precautions to prevent players or spectators from threatening or assaulting referees or other players before, during and after games. Police protection will be required if the referee unit request it for a particular game or games with prior game approval. The cost of which shall be the sole burden of the team whose actions brought about such a request.

B. Managers or coaches of teams shall be in possession of all passes. The referee shall keep all passes in his possession during the game, and if any coach has any occasion to question players participating in a game, he must do so in the presence of the opposing coach and the referee. The referee shall check players against passes before the game begins.

C. Managers or coaches of opposing teams, shall hand two (2) copies of their respective team's roster to the referee before the game has started. A players first and last name must be given in full and typed or clearly printed alongside his jersey number. The referee shall sign and give one (1) copy of the roster to the opposing captains before the start of the game. The remaining copies shall be sent to the designated league official. All teams must use current roster forms supplied by the league. Any violation of this rule shall be a fine as determined by BDSL Board of Directors.

D. Each team shall register with and provide the league secretary with a home playing field (name and location) and the color of dress. The name, address and telephone number of the team coach and one other team member must be provided before team registration. Any subsequent changes in team status in these matters must also be provided.

E. The fine for a forfeit is set forth by the BDSL Board of Directors.

F. Eighteen (18) players may play league games.

G. Players may be substituted and re-substituted as frequently as desired with the consent of the referee. Unlimited substitutions can only be made at the following times:

1. After a goal is scored
2. Any goal kick
3. Throw-in; but only by the team awarded the throw-in
4. Half time
5. When play is stopped by the referee for an injury
6. Player receiving a caution may be substituted.

H. When a player is sent off the field for misconduct, the referee must retain said player's pass and send it with his report to the designated league official. The pass will be returned to the player's team manager only after his suspension has elapsed and a fine has been paid. Any player sent off the field for misconduct shall not be replaced.

- I. If any manager, coach, trainer or other team official is ordered from the field of play or bench for misconduct, the club shall be fined as determined by the BDSL Board of Directors.
- J. In the event of a late start for severe weather conditions, the referee may consult the managers and if agreed, play shorter halves; in no case shall the halves be shorter than thirty-five (35) minutes.
- K. Any team leaving the field of play in any scheduled game, under authority of this league without the consent of the referee, shall be penalized as follows:
1. If a league game, offending team shall lose game and points to opponent.
  2. If an exhibition game, offending team shall be punished as the Board of Directors may deem fit.
- L. The home team or club shall be responsible for visible, correct and complete markings of the playing field. Corner flags and nets will also be provided by the home team. Whenever possible, the field shall be protected against overflowing by the public. Balls shall be provided by the home team and are subject to approval of the referee. Any violation of this rule will bring a fine as determined by the Board.
- M. Either team may provide one club linesman unless neutral linesmen are assigned to the game. Both teams must agree to the use of a club linesperson before the start of the match.
- N. Any team late for kick-off shall be fined as determined by the BDSL Board of Directors, as per referee report. Any team not present within twenty (20) minutes after the scheduled kick-off time shall be considered as having forfeited the game and will be dealt with by the Board of Directors accordingly.

## RED CARDS

A. Guidelines for Team/Player penalties—When a red card is issued, the following will be a guideline for the red card committee to determine what penalties will be assessed:

### 1. *Ungentlemanly conduct*

Description: Profane language or obscenity directed at players or referees. Rules violations such as deliberate handballs or handballs to prevent a goal, or impeding a players progress on a clear-cut breakaway.

#### *Suggested penalty:*

- 1st Offense: ejection from the game and suspension from the following game plus fifteen dollar (\$15) fine
- 2nd Offense: ejection from the game and suspension from the next two (2) games plus a twenty-five dollar (\$25) fine
- 3rd Offense: ejection from the game and suspension from the next four (4) games plus a thirty-five dollar (\$35) fine
- 4th Offense: ejection from the game and suspension from the next six (6) games plus a fifty dollar (\$50) fine

Any penalty should be carried over into the next season if there are to few games left in the season to fulfill the suspension.

### 2. *Flagrant fouls or referee abuse*

Description: Fighting, biting, tackling with intent to injure, threatening or menacing, spitting on or in the direction of an opponent or referee. In regard to referees, any type of assault or otherwise which they deem steps beyond the bounds of acceptable conduct on a soccer field.

#### *Suggested penalty:*

- 1st Offense: ejection from the game and suspension from the next three (3) games plus a thirty-five dollar (\$35) fine
- 2nd Offense: ejection from the game and suspension from the next six (6) games plus a fifty dollar (\$50) fine

3rd Offense: ejection from the game and suspension for 1 year plus a seventy-five dollar (\$75) fine

4th Offense: ejection from the game and lifetime league suspension plus a one hundred fifty dollar (\$150) fine, to be paid before any appeal is heard.

Any of these game fines could be carried into the next year if they occur in the last few games of the season. They could also be shortened under extenuating circumstances if reviewed by the Board of Directors finds it reasonable cause for altering the penalty. Also if an appeal is brought before the team representatives for a vote and by a majority vote it is decided the penalty could be either lengthened or shortened.

3. Yellow cards will not carry over into the next season. Your 4th yellow card WILL carry over to the next season. Upon receiving your 4th yellow card in a season it will convert to a red and player will sit the next scheduled game.

4. ALL suspensions carry over between seasons.

B. A player sent off the field for assaulting a referee shall automatically be suspended for one (1) year or longer from the date of the offense, upon review of the BDSL Board of Directors.

1) *Referee assault*, the act of any physical violence or personal attack upon a referee, his equipment, his property (including his vehicle) and the threat of assault by raising a clenched fist or hand holding any object that could be used as a weapon or by verbally threatening a referee, or member of his family, with assault shall be deemed a "referee assault" under the terms and conditions of the United States Soccer Federation Rule 1108.

2) *Physical violence and personal attack*, shall include, but not be limited to, such things as hitting, pushing, slapping, choking, spitting on or at, grabbing a referee's personal equipment such as red or yellow cards, notebook, or whistle, or knocking any such items out of his hand; and the act for throwing any object at a referee.

3) *Verbal threats*, remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm and therefore cannot be ignored or overlooked by any official concerned with his or his family's personal safety.

## LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

A. In determining a league championship, three (3) points shall be awarded for a win and one (1) point for a tie. There will be no overtime in league games with the exception of the championship game. Games won by forfeit or games won by league decision, shall be awarded with a score of two (2) goals to zero (0).

In the event of a tie, the champion shall be decided as follows:

- 1) Head to head record
- 2) Best goal differential
- 3) Fewest goals against
- 4) Most goals for
- 5) If a tie still exists, co-champions shall be declared

B. Prize money will be determined on an annual basis by the Board.

C. League cup games shall not end in a tie. In the case of a tie in regulation time, two (2) fifteen (15) minute periods of overtime shall be played. In the case, the game remains a tie at the end of overtime the winner shall be decided by penalty kicks (five (5) each then one (1) each).

D. The cup champion shall be awarded a team trophy. The champion shall hold the trophy for one (1) year. The team manager or other officer of the club shall be responsible for same. Any damage to said trophy must be made good by the team or club holding the same. Trophies must be returned to the league not later than May fifteenth (15th) of each year.

**PROTESTS**

A. The Board of Directors shall decide all protests, claims, charges and cases of misconduct. Their decision shall be binding until such time as the N.W.N.Y.S.S.F.A. reverses their executive council's decision.

B. Protests on field conditions, equipment, or rosters must be logged with the referee (in writing) before kick-off. The referee shall require the responsible team to remove the cause of objection, if possible. If the cause of the objection is not removed, a protest shall be considered to have been entered and the protesting team is liable for the protest bond according to Rule 16 (C). No protest shall be withdrawn except with the full consent of the Board of Directors or its designee.

C. All protests concerning games must be sent in duplicate form to the league secretary and must contain all facts upon which it is based, and must be delivered to the secretary within three (3) days of the protested incident. A protest bond of thirty-five dollars (\$35) must be enclosed. If the protest is upheld by the Board of Directors, the bond will be returned. If the protest is denied, the bond will go into league funds.

D. The secretary of this league shall send a copy of the protest to the team protested against, and must notify all parties concerned to attend the meeting at which said case shall be tried. Each team may support its cause by witnesses, but no lawyer shall testify, unless he is a bona fide member of the team he represents.

E. All protests and appeals against the decision of this league or the Board of Directors must be filed ten (10) days before presenting it to the N.W.N.Y.S.S.F.A. for a decision, a copy of the appeal must be sent to the league secretary.

F. If a member of the Board of Directors is connected with a team or club concerned in any dispute whatsoever he shall not vote with the Board when the dispute is being considered. Neither shall he directly or indirectly advance an opinion in his capacity as a Board member that may influence the judgment of his fellow Board members in favor of his team or club position.

G. Appeals must be taken to the State Association, provided the appellant shall have given ten (10) days notice to the body, whose decision it proposes to appeal, to enable such body to re-hear or reconsider the matter. Appeals must be accompanied by all appropriate fees and shall be refunded if the protest is favorable. The decision of an affiliated body may be reversed or varied, but the penalty shall not be increased by this association.

H. Appeals of the final decision of an affiliated body must be made within five (5) days of notification of such decision, and the decision shall be binding, pending the appeal. In the event of a special meeting being called to hear an appeal, the State Association may require the appellant, should the appeal not be sustained, the expenses shall be borne by the person/team filing the appeal. Appeals from the decisions of the State Association may be taken to the United States Soccer Federation only after a request of reconsideration of the action appealed from has been refused.

**REFEREES**

As per the current agreement between BDSL and Western New York Referee Unit (WNYRU) and Laws of the Game under US Soccer Federation .

**LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION**

A. All communications to the league shall be addressed to a member of the board and, if not otherwise specified in this Constitution and the by-laws, the postmark shall be the deciding factor as to the date of mailing. Should the postmark be illegible, the date which a member of the board received the mail shall be considered the date for record purposes.

B. All indebtedness to this league, not otherwise specifically defined must be paid within seven (7) days of notification of same. Teams violating this provision shall be dealt with by the Board of Directors.

C. Any club, team, player or official affiliated with this league, violating any rules and regulations of this league shall be constituted guilty of misconduct and shall be dealt with as the Board of Directors may deem fit.

D. This league shall be affiliated with the Northwestern W.N.Y.S.A. and shall at all times recognize the authority, rulings and laws of said body. In case of conflicts or omissions in this Constitution and by-laws, the rules and laws of the highest parent organization shall prevail wherever applicable.

E. No amendment, changing this Constitution and by-laws, can be proposed and passed at the same meeting. Amendments shall be brought to a vote at the next scheduled general meeting and must receive two-thirds (2/3) of the votes present to be ratified.

F. As necessary to conduct league and cup competition, the Board of Directors shall determine policy and procedures for the following:

- 1) Registration of teams
- 2) Registration of players
- 3) Transfer of players
- 4) Assignment of referees
- 5) Rescheduling of games
- 6) Day of the week and playing times
- 7) Pre-game activities
- 8) Reporting results
- 9) Disciplining players, coaches, teams and clubs

The Board of Directors may create positions and appoint individuals to administer this policy and procedures. The procedures shall be provided to each team at the time of registration.

**FEES AND FINES**

The following is a list of fines and fees, as determined by the Board on an annual basis. The list of fines and fees will be published prior to the start of each season.

1. Rescheduling of games/field changes: Assignor Fees + Ref Fees + \$2.00
2. Late cancellation of game: Fee according to Ref contract + \$25
3. Attendance of less than 7 of 12 league meetings: \$25 per meeting less than seven
4. Field problems (no lines, no flags, grass not cut, etc.): \$10.00\*
5. Late start: \$10.00\*
6. Not presenting two official copies of team roster: \$10.00\*
7. Uniform problems (no numbers, duplicate numbers or numbers falling off, not matching, etc.): \$10.00\*
8. Returned checks: Bank fee + \$10.00
9. Player replacement pass: \$5.00

\*A fine schedule will be in place for "equipment violations." Equipment violations shall include such things as late starts, shirts not matching or improperly numbered, no corner flags, no markings on field, no nets, improper rosters, etc. There is a \$10.00 initial fine for each infraction, with a \$5.00 increase for each subsequent infraction to a maximum fine of \$25.00 per infraction.

All fines must be paid within 10 days of game or forfeits will occur.

Any other fines not included in the above list shall be determined by the Board.

**APPENDIX A List of Lifetime Members**