

NORTHERN COUNTIES SOCCER ASSOCIATION (NCSA)

www.ncsanj.com

RULES OF COMPETITION

Fall 2023 – Spring 2024

(Updated-3-12-24)

Notice to Club Coaches, Representatives, and Presidents

Any Club Coach, President, or Representative is welcome to ask questions or recommend changes to the **Rules of Competition**. Please email the Rules Chairman with questions, or submit change recommendations along with your name, email address and phone number to:

Jeff Mazzola

Rules Chair

Email: Jeffmazzola@ncsanj.com

Notice to Club Presidents and Representatives

The Northern Counties Soccer Association (NCSA) President shall annually schedule a minimum of one meeting for the presidents (or their designees) of all clubs participating in the NCSA. Any club that does not provide representation to this meeting would be fined as reflected in the Section 9.

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1. LEAGUE SANCTIONING

1.1 GOVERNING BODY

Prior to the beginning of each season, the NCSA Board of Directors will determine under which governing body (ies) the league will be sanctioned.

NCSA will offer in the Fall 2022 & Spring 2023 season competitions sanctioned by US CLUB SOCCER.

If any NCSA rule of competition is in conflict with US Club, the US Club rule will prevail.

The NCSA Board of Directors will set all deadlines and dates as detailed herein.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 AGE GROUPS

The term "youth" as applied to these rules shall mean an amateur player who has not attained his/her 19th birthday before the first day of January preceding the seasonal year in which he/she applies for registration. A player's US CLUB registration age is determined by their birth year. For example, for the 2023-2024 seasonal year, a U-9 player must be under age 9 as of January 1, 2015

Pursuant to US CLUB SOCCER, all children are allowed to play travel soccer.

2023 / 2024 SEASONAL YEAR – Birth Year Mandate and Age Bracket Table

Season	2022- 2023	2023- 2024	2024- 2025
Birth Year			
2020			
2019			
2018			U7
2017		U7	U8
2016	U7	U8	U9
2015	U8	U9	U10
2014	U9	U10	U11
2013	U10	U11	U12
2012	U11	U12	U13
2011	U12	U13	U14
2010	U13	U14	U15
2009	U14	U15	U16
2008	U15	U16	U17
2007	U16	U17	U18
2006	U17	U18	U19
2005	U18	U19	U19
2004	U19		

2003			
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2.2 COMPETITION BY GENDER

While it is recognized that the NCSA has separate competition for boys and girls, there may be occasions where the mixing of genders within a given team will be permitted. Teams of mixed gender will play in the boy's flight of their appropriate age group level or higher. Teams of one gender will not be allowed to play against teams of a different gender. (Girl teams will not be flighted with boy teams.) As stated in [USSF policy, 601-5, section 6 \(B\)](#), and listed in part herein, For the purposes of registration on gender based amateur teams, a player may register with the gender team with which the player identifies, and confirmation sufficient for guaranteeing access shall be satisfied by documentation or evidence that shows the stated gender is sincerely held, and part of a person's core identity. Note: If USSF adopts policy updates/changes, NCSA will mirror and adopt the USSF policy.

2.2.1 Mixed Gender Flights

The NCSA will have a Mixed Gender flight for the U19 players. The flight, per rule 2.2, will be known as the BU19M flight and Clubs will be able to enter teams that are open to players of all gender identities. Play up or cross play is permitted in accordance with Rule 4.5.

3. REGISTRATION

3.1 REGISTRATION ELIGIBILITY

Each team and club must comply with all of the requirements listed in these Rules of Competition and the NCSA Bylaws. A team must be in full compliance and be in good standing in order to compete. A club must be in good standing in order to register teams.

3.2 TEAM REGISTRATION ONLINE

At least 30 days prior to the team registration deadlines, the NCSA will make available registration instructions and functions, including details about when payment is due. It is the responsibility of each Club to submit these registrations and payments per the instructions before the registration deadline.

3.3 TEAM REGISTRATION INFORMATION & TIMING

All data must be submitted for each team in order for registration to be considered complete. Each Club's designated representative must submit fully completed Club and Team Registration information and other registration related information (which shall include field information, team colors and club officers), and an acknowledgment accepting all NCSA Bylaws and Rules. The NCSA Board will annually establish the due dates for the submittal of this information. Any missing information or failure to make payment will result in the entire submission being considered incomplete.

3.3.1 Early Registration

Each season the NCSA Board shall determine if there will be an incentive for Early Registration in the form of a credit. In seasons where the NCSA Board notifies clubs that there will be an Early

Registration credit, clubs will receive a credit in an amount to be determined by the board for each team that meets BOTH of the following two requirements: 1) registered by the league's posted and/or emailed Early Credit Registration deadline with ALL required information submitted via the online registration procedures **AND** 2) payment is received on or before the league's posted and/or emailed deadline for Early Credit Registration payment.

3.3.2 On-Time Registration and Payment

A club's registration will be considered on time if the information is submitted by the league Registration deadline **AND** payment is received as directed. For clubs that request checks through a town or third-party, proof of the request must be submitted to the league on or before the close of registration.

3.3.3 Late Registration

If registration is completed after the close of registration (if space permits and approved by Division Commissioner or Board) but prior to the Flight meeting, or the date for flights to be finalized if no meeting, add \$100 per team.

If registration is completed at or after the Flight meeting, or the date for flights to be finalized if no meeting (if space permits and approved by Division Commissioner or Board), add \$200 per team.

If a team is registered late, payment is due on the date of registration.

3.3.4. Late Payment

If payment is received 4-21 days after the due date for payment, add \$50 per team.

If payment is received 22-34 days after the due date for payment, add \$100 per team.

If payment is received 34 or more days after the due date for payment, add \$200 per team.

3.3.5 Payments

Any payment that is dishonored by the issuing entity shall be replaced within 7 days by the club and there shall be a fine of \$75 per each dishonored payment.

3.4 TEAM WITHDRAWAL

A club dropping a team after the Close of Registration will be fined \$25 per team in addition to the loss of registration fee.

A club dropping a team after the posting of flights, but before appeals closure, will be fined \$50 per team in addition to the loss of registration fee.

A club dropping a team after the Flight Meeting (or date for flights to be finalized after appeals closure if no meeting) will be fined the cost of the registration fee in addition to the loss of registration fee.

A club dropping a team after the Coaches Meeting (or a date 10 days before the first scheduled game of the season if no meeting) will be fined the cost of the registration fee plus \$100 in addition to the loss of registration fee.

A club dropping a team after the first scheduled game of the season will be fined twice the cost of the registration fee in addition to the loss of registration fee.

A club registering a team in an incorrect age group and/or gender and needing to move the team to the correct age group and/or gender will be considered to have dropped the incorrectly registered team and added a new team for purposes of late registration and team withdrawal. The league does not allow a club to “replace” a team with a dropped team playing in a different flight or age group. If a club would like to “replace” a team, the club must first drop the team subject to section [3.4](#), Team Withdrawal, and then request to add a team subject to section [3.3.3](#), Late Registration.

In addition, should a club remove a team and play in another league, the fines noted above shall be doubled.

3.5 PASSES AND TEAM ROSTERS

3.5.a US CLUB SOCCER guidelines

Each club will be responsible for the input and the transmission of the player/coach registration data to the US Club Soccer website.

3.5.b Verification and Watermark Procedure of Official US Club NCSA Roster

Each team must submit its roster, including updated versions, to the NCSA for uploading for use in NCSA games according to the **procedure outlined at www.ncsanj.com**. **Please use the checklist as a guide as the procedure MUST be followed in order to receive the watermarked US Club NCSA roster for game use.**

Player/Coach Passes:

All passes must be requested through the GotSport system and approved by US Club.

-Once approved, the passes will be printed by the club through the GotSport website.

-Any white paper can be used to print player/coach passes.

-The passes must be laminated individually in the folded format.

-Clubs will determine who will print passes for the teams (registrar, coach, manager, etc.). The individual with the role of Registrar in GotSport regulates access and permissions for each user in the club.

Team Rosters:

Each club will email a PDF version of the NCSA roster for each team to the league at ncsarosters@ncsanj.com.

The league will place an NCSA watermark, season and verified date on the PDF document and make it available online for the club and coach(es) to print.

The club must have an NCSA watermarked roster online for game use.

Player/Coach Suspensions:

When a player or coach is issued a red card, all coaches in that game (including any red carded coach) are responsible (a) to notify the club's president and club representative of the red card and (b) not to permit that red-carded player or coach to participate in any NCSA game until the decision by the Games Conduct Committee (GCC) is issued and the suspension is served. If a red-carded coach holds a pass for more than one club, the coach is responsible to tell all clubs about the red card/suspension as the suspension applies to all passes held by the coach. **ANY RED CARDED COACH OR PLAYER IS SUSPENDED FROM ANY AND ALL NCSA ACTIVITY, INCLUDING REFERRING NCSA GAMES, UNTIL THE SUSPENSION IS SERVED FOR THE TEAM THEY WERE COACHING/ PLAYING FOR WHEN THE RED CARD WAS ISSUED. (FOR EXAMPLE: IF A COACH IS RED CARDED DURING HIS/HER U12 GIRLS 10AM GAME AND HE/SHE HAS 3 OTHER GAMES TO COACH ON SAME DAY, HE/SHE IS NOT ALLOWED TO COACH, OR REFEREE, UNTIL HE/SHE SERVES THE SUSPENSION FOR THE U12 GIRLS TEAM HE/SHE WAS COACHING AT 10AM WHEN RED CARD WAS ISSUED) See Rule 8.2.5**

The club is responsible to monitor the NCSA Caution/Ejection report and to ensure that (a) its coaches comply with the notice provision above and (b) that the player or coach does not participate until the decision by the GCC is issued and the suspension is served.

The league will notify the assigned referee(s) of all suspensions for the upcoming game. The referee is responsible to check the game paperwork to determine if the suspended coach/player participates. Within 4 hours of the end of that game or the end of the referee's games that date, the referee will email the league to inform the league of the player/coach's non-participation.

If a suspended player participates in a NCSA game, a fine of \$250 will be assessed to the club and a five-game suspension will be assessed to the head coach of the team.

If a suspended coach participates in a NCSA game, a fine of \$250 will be assessed to the club and an additional five-game suspension for the suspended coach will be assessed.

REMINDER – per rule 8.2.5, Suspension of player or coach is for all on-field NCSA sanctioned activities, including the ability to referee NCSA games, until the suspension has been satisfied for the team which they were coaching/playing or at which the misconduct occurred at time of suspension. (FOR EXAMPLE: IF A COACH IS RED CARDED DURING HIS/HER U12 GIRLS 10AM GAME AND HE/SHE HAS 3 OTHER GAMES TO COACH ON SAME DAY, HE/SHE IS NOT ALLOWED TO COACH, OR REFEREE, UNTIL HE/SHE SERVES THE SUSPENSION FOR THE U12 GIRLS TEAM HE/SHE WAS COACHING AT 10AM WHEN RED CARD WAS ISSUED)

3.6 PASS VALIDATION AND ROSTER SIZE

3.6.a US CLUB SOCCER Guidelines

All US Club Soccer passes will be printed by the NCSA approved club/team. Each club shall transmit the required data to US Club Soccer to obtain a valid pass, for each individual player and coach. Each team must have at least one coach. Each coach must have a valid pass for each club they coach/train/manage within NCSA.

Each club is responsible to establish and monitor their own requirements for a coach. No players can be registered to any team until a licensed coach has been rostered to that team. NCSA requires that each coach must comply with all US Club requirements prior to the issuance of the pass.

A valid coach's pass issued by that season's sanctioning authority is required by any individual who provides direction to players at any NCSA game or club practice. A coach need not be listed on a particular team's US Club NCSA roster to coach that team; a coach must be carded through an NCSA club to coach that club's teams. A coach must have a US Club pass with the NCSA club printed on each pass to coach an NCSA league game.

3.7 PROOF OF AGE AND INDENTITY

Each pass submitted for validation shall be accompanied by a copy of one of the following:

1. The player's certificate of birth.
2. The player's passport.
3. The player's certificate of Naturalization.
4. The player's Alien Registration Card with proof of age noted.

For US Club Soccer: All coaches must have the Registration and Medical Treatment Authorization Form (#R002) in their possession for all players playing in that game.

At the request of the Games Conduct Chairman or the NCSA Board, the Registrar or appointed member of the Board shall take all reasonable steps to establish the eligibility of a player or coach and to confirm the accuracy of information entered upon a player's pass. No coach or player shall unreasonably refuse to provide original documentation or cooperate in any such investigation. In order to ensure that clubs comply with this rule, each season the NCSA shall select eight (8) teams who may be required to submit original proof of age documents.

3.8 INACCURATE INFORMATION

Any player or coach who has obtained a pass with incorrect information, any coach who knowingly allows a player to possess an inaccurate pass, or a pass that has been altered so as to deceive inspection, or any player who plays illegally for any team shall be suspended immediately, and the matter investigated by the Games Conduct Committee. The Games Conduct Committee may also recommend that all facts concerning the incident be forwarded to the sanctioning youth soccer body (US Club Soccer).

A team will forfeit every game in which a player with an inaccurate or illegal pass was included on the team roster. Any coach who possesses an inaccurate or illegal coach's pass or player's pass will be subject to severe reprimand by the Games Conduct Committee that may result in any combination of a fine to the coach up to \$1,000, lifetime suspension, and game forfeiture.

3.8.1 Player or Coach Presenting Pass Not For That Person/NO Pass

As noted above, every player and coach must have a valid pass. Any player or coach who plays or coaches without a valid pass having been presented to the officials violates this rule. Any coach who presents a player without a valid pass, whether that player is permitted to play or not, violates this rule. Any player or coach who presents a pass to the officials in an attempt to play or coach, which pass is not valid for that player or coach, also violates this rule. A player or coach who violates this rule shall be suspended immediately, and the matter investigated by the Games Conduct Committee. The Games Conduct Committee may also recommend that all facts concerning the incident be forwarded to the sanctioning youth soccer body (US Club Soccer). The minimum suspension for such a violation is 3 games for a player and 5 games for a coach; the minimum fine for a coach for any violation of this rule is \$300. Maximum suspension is lifetime and maximum fine is \$1,000. In addition, a team will forfeit every game in which a player or coach participates in violation of this rule and will incur penalties for such forfeits in

addition to the above. If the violation is for an attempt to play or coach, which is prevented by the officials, forfeit shall not apply but all other penalties shall apply.

4. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

4.1 TEAM ROSTER

NO roster moves will be allowed after the 7th Sunday of regularly scheduled play in each season unless there are extraordinary circumstances which must be approved by NCSA Board Committee.

4.1.a US Club Soccer Guidelines

All teams under US Club Soccer may have on their roster up to 26 players.

The game day roster for a full-sided (U13 to U19, 11 v 11) team may only have 18 players that can be present at the game. Coaches must declare the 18 players eligible for each game prior to the start of the match. This must be done on a US Club NCSA verified roster. The game day roster for a small-sided (U11/U12, 9 v 9) team may only have 16 players. Coaches must declare the 16 players eligible for each game prior to the start of the match. The game day roster for a small-sided (U9/U10 and U13-15 "I" Flight, 7 v 7) team may only have 14 players.

4.2 PLAYER AND COACHES PASSES

Only US Club passes which state Northern Counties Soccer Association (NCSA) will be allowed. Passes issued through other leagues or other sources are **not** allowed nor valid for NCSA league games.

A player can only be rostered to one team for one club within NCSA and may only have a pass for that one team.

A COACH WITH A VALID COACH'S PASS CAN ONLY COACH WITHIN THE CLUB STATED ON THE PASS

All passes must be laminated.

No coach or player shall be allowed to participate in a game without presenting a valid pass issued through US Club Soccer for NCSA to the referee. Each club is responsible to monitor the NCSA Caution/Ejection report to ensure full compliance. **IN THE EVENT THERE IS A TEMPORARY CHANGE TO THE NO PASS, NO PLAY, AND/OR NO PASS, NO COACH RULE AS DETAILED ABOVE, THE LEAGUE WILL PROVIDE FORMAL WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE CLUB(S) AND REFEREES OF SUCH CHANGES.**

4.3 PLAYER TRANSFER AND RELEASE

4.3.1 Definitions

As used in this Section and elsewhere in these Rules of Competition, the term "seasonal year" covers the period from August 1 through July 31. The current season year runs from August 1, 2023 through July 31, 2024. The term "season" refers to the Fall or Spring League Schedules during the seasonal year.

4.3.2 The Team-Player Relationship

It is the expectation of the NCSA that a player should be bound to his/her team and the team to that player for the entire seasonal year and the NCSA expects teams and players to honor this commitment. However, players may transfer to a team in a different club, subject to the

requirements in sections 4.3.3 and [4.3.4](#). Player transfers within a club are permitted by the NCSA and are subject to the club's control.

4.3.3 Transfers

- The following are the penalties for transfers during the seasonal year.
 - No penalty
 - Friendly Transfer
 - Both teams must contact the NCSA Administrator and/or NCSA Rules Chair, prior to transfer to confirm agreed upon transfer.
 - Transfer from team who has left the NCSA
 - Transfer from a team that has disbanded
 - Transfer forced by circumstances beyond player's, team's, or club's control as determined by the NCSA
 - 3 game penalty
 - Transfer from another team in the NCSA, where a transfer agreement was not reached prior to transfer.
 - All transfers are subject to review by the NCSA Board, or its appointee and penalties will be levied by the same, if deemed necessary.

4.3.4 Poaching

- Poaching is an action by a team or club to induce or attempt to induce a rostered player of any other team to leave the player's present team and play for the team or club during the current seasonal year. Poaching does not apply to inducing players to play for a team in the following seasonal year. All claims of poaching will be heard by the NCSA Appeals Committee. Penalties for poaching may include suspension of a team and/or club up to one year and a fine up to \$500 per incident. A club is responsible for the actions of all its teams, including coaches and anyone acting on behalf of the club and including teams playing and/or not playing in the NCSA; if a non-NCSA team violates this section, the club participating in the NCSA is responsible for its actions and any penalties assessed.

4.4 NO "GUEST PLAY" WITHIN NCSA COMPETITION

No player may play for another NCSA team in league competition, other than playing up within his/her own Club pursuant to Rule 4.5.

4.5 TEMPORARY PLAYING ON ANOTHER TEAM -- "PLAYING UP / PLAYING DOWN"

A player registered to an NCSA team may temporarily play on a different NCSA team, subject to the following conditions:

Teams:

The team from which the player temporarily transfers must not be suspended and must be registered with the NCSA for league play that season. The X flight is used for NCSA Cup teams, and the R flight is used for non-NCSA teams solely for referee assigning purposes. Teams in X or R flight are not a "league team" and players cannot transfer from such a team to play on an NCSA league team.

The team the player is rostered to and the team the player is temporarily playing for must be a member of the same club and eligible to play during the same season as defined in the NCSA Bylaws.

For purposes of this rule, flight means the level (A, B, C, etc.) following the age (for example, U10C). Groups are the designation after the level, a subset of the flight, which may be none, blue (B) or white (W).

Cross flight play (for example, U10CB temporarily playing on U10CW) is permitted. Temporary play or “playing up” is not permitted within the same flight and group (club with 2 teams in same group - U10CB team may not play up on another U10CB team).

Players:

The player must be age eligible (same age or younger) to temporarily play for another team.

Playing Up:

Teams are allowed to have as many players engage in temporary play “playing up”, from a lower age team or lower flight team or a team within the same flight from a different groups (for example 10CB – playing on 10CW), subject to an overall player limitation in accordance with 4.1a. There is no limit on the number of times a player can play up for a team or teams.

Playing Down:

Teams are limited to a maximum of 2 players from a higher flight level or 2 age eligible players from a higher age group per game. The maximum of either combination is 2 such players at any game. For example, 2 players from a U12A flight can play on a U12B flight team or 1 player from the U12 A team and one age eligible player from a U13 team can play with the U12B. **Players can play down 2 times per season to a specific team. If a player plays down more than two times to a specific team the player shall be considered an ineligible player and the sanctions of Rule 4.8 shall apply.**

Girls may temporarily play on a boys' team, subject to the above limitation of 2 players from a higher group or age eligible players from a higher age team. A boy cannot temporarily play on a girls' team. The term “boy” and “girl” used here reference the gender aligned with the player card and not the team to which they are rostered.

Match Day Form:

The temporary player's information (name, pass #, team playing up from and uniform number) must be electronically entered on the NCSA Match Day Form and the referee's must be made aware of the temporary players.

4.6 PERMANENT "PLAYING UP"

A player may permanently register in an age group higher than the player's correct age group.

4.7 SECONDARY PLAYER PASSES AND MULTIPLE ROSTERING

No player may participate in the NCSA competition on a secondary player pass (dual card if US Club Soccer) if the player's primary pass is with another NCSA registered team. A player may participate in the NCSA competition on a secondary player pass if his/her primary pass is from a team in another league.

4.8 PENALTY

Failure to comply with this section (all parts of section 4) shall render a player ineligible and the team for which they played while ineligible shall forfeit all games that the player appeared on the official game roster or Match Day Form, in addition to any other penalties indicated within these rules of competition.

5. THE COMPETITION

5.1 REGULAR SEASON DURATION

The NCSA Board will annually establish the dates for the beginning and end of each season. All scheduled games must be played. The only exception is if, by the end of the last regularly scheduled week of the season, a game has not been played due to weather or field condemnation and the cancellation was reported to the NCSA Division Commissioner(s) and the NCSA Games Chair(s). In this case, the game need not be played if all the following conditions have been met:

- The game has no impact on award standings for these teams or any other team in their flight; **and**
- Both coaches mutually agree not to play the game; **and**
- The Division Commissioner and the Games Chairman both approve the decision not to play the game.

If the game is not played and the above stated criteria have been met, a mutual 'game no-play' will be declared. **This exception does not apply to any other TBS games.**

5.1.1 NCSA Cup

- Laws of the Game:
 - All games will be played in accordance with NCSA League rules, except as specifically modified below.
- Game Day Paperwork:
 - Same as any other NCSA Games
- Match Day Form:
 - Temporary "playing up" is **NOT** allowed. Teams can only play with the players on their official NCSA Cup roster.

Players may not compete for more than 1 NCSA Cup team.

 - If a player's team has been eliminated from their NCSA Cup tournament bracket and other teams in that club are still competing in the NCSA Cup (have not yet been eliminated), players from the team that has been eliminated may **not** join the NCSA Cup roster of any of the remaining teams.

- **Determining the Outcome of a Game:**
 - **Two-game rounds:**
 - If the game is the first game in a two-game round, then the game may end in a tie.
 - If the game is the second game in a two game round then the following protocol shall be followed:
 - If the first game ended in a tie, and the second game ends in a tie, the game shall proceed immediately to a Penalty Kick Shootout as described herein.
 - If there was a winner in the first game, and the second game ends in a tie, the game shall be considered completed.
 - If the winner of the second game is the same team as the team that won the first game, the game shall be considered completed.
 - If, after the second game, each of the two teams has each won one of the games in the two round-game round, then the game shall proceed immediately to a Penalty Kick Shootout as defined herein to determine which team advances to the next round of the NCSA Cup.
 - **One-game rounds:**
 - If the game ends in a tie, then the game shall proceed immediately to a Penalty Kick Shootout as defined herein to determine which team advances to the next round of the NCSA Cup.
- **Extra Time:** There will be no extra time in any NCSA Cup game except for the Championship round.
 - In the Championship round only, if the score is tied at the end of regulation time period for that bracket, then the teams will play will play two 5-minute overtime periods, with a 2-minute break between the two overtime periods. There is no “golden goal” provision; the overtime periods are to be played in their entirety.
 - If, at the end of the two overtime periods, the score remains tied, the teams will proceed immediately to a Penalty Kick Shootout in order to determine the winner.
- **Penalty Kick Shoot-Out:**
 - In non-Championship rounds, in the event the score is tied after regulation, penalty kicks will be taken to determine the winner.
 - Only those players on the field at the end of the game may compete.
 - Each team will designate five (5) players to take shots in an ABABABABAB pattern, until a decisive result is reached.
 - If the penalty kick score is tied at the end of five kicks, teams will continue to take penalty kicks, alternately in matched pairs, until there is a winner.
All players on the field, including the goalkeeper, must take a penalty kick before any player is allowed to kick a second time.

5.2 FLIGHTING

Division Commissioners will flight Division 5 (U9 Fall season) and Division 6 (U8 both Fall and Spring) at their discretion. NO appeals are allowed for these age groups.

For all other divisions, Division Commissioners will flight each team and consider the team's ability, past performance, and number of teams for scheduling purposes. Appeals are considered based on procedure below.

Flighting procedure:

- Teams register and request flight
- Registration closes
- Flights posted within 72 hours of registration closing
- Appeals closed within 72 hours of flights posted
- Division Commissioners will review and respond to appeals during the 72 hour Appeals window. Division Commissioners will attempt to resolve all Appeals with "Accepted" or "Rejected" along with their comments or communicate to team regarding decision

A Coach has the right to a final appeal to the Appeals Committee to the flight his/her team has been assigned by the Division Commissioner

- Appeals Committee hears any final unresolved appeals within 48 hours of appeals closed.
- This notification must take place in writing to the division commissioner before the 72 hour appeals window is closed or within 24 hours of notification of appeal being rejected whichever is later
- If the coach fails to provide the necessary notification, the appeal will not be allowed.

Appeals heard by the appeal committee must meet the following criteria:

- A different flight was requested in the initial registration; or
- There has been a significant change in the team personnel from the time of registration through the time of flighting, which will affect the team's ability to compete at the same level as previously requested; or
- The proposed flighting moved the team's usual competition to another flight.
- In the event the Division Commissioner moves a team late in the appeals process, the Division Commissioner will try to communicate such a move with the team(s) impacted, but in some cases moves will take place without consent or knowledge of team(s) impacted based on decision made by Division Commissioner. Teams impacted will have 48 hours from close of Appeals process to appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will review and make decision on final placement of team. All decisions by the Appeals Committee are final

The Appeals Committee is composed of four (4) members of the NCSA Board, which must include the Division Commissioner (who can vote) of the team in question, and either the league president or vice president.

The unresolved appeal must be heard within 48 hours of the closing of appeals.

All decisions by the appeals committee are final.

5.3 SCHEDULING

After the Flighting Meeting the Games Chair(s) shall prepare the game schedule for the season and post it online. After the schedule is posted online and notification made that it is final, it shall not be altered in any way except as provided for in these Rules. Failing to comply with any part of this section concerning game changes shall result in the fees/fines noted below.

5.3.1 Automatic Postponements

It is the intent of the NCSA to play games as scheduled. The only acceptable reasons for automatic postponement of a scheduled game are: Referee decision at game time; League-wide weather conditions; and local field condemnation. If the postponement of a game is for a reason justifying automatic postponement, the game will be marked as a TBS, but is required to be played in a timely manner, that is within two weeks of date originally scheduled game. All reasonable effort should be made to reschedule the game at the time of postponement. (Exception: for weather cancellations at the beginning of the season, games must be scheduled within two weeks of the actual start of the weekly schedule.)

5.3.2 Referee Decision at Game Time

The referee may decide to postpone the game for weather or any other reason pursuant to IFAB rules as modified by USSF, USYSA and/or US Club Soccer and/or NCSA. The Games Chair(s) AND Division Commissioner must be informed within 24 hours of such decision by the home team club.

5.3.3 League-Wide Weather Conditions

If weather conditions are deemed severe enough a league-wide postponement may be called by the President, Vice-President or Games Chair(s). Such decisions will be posted on the NCSA website.

5.3.4 Local Field Condemnation

The procedure for notifying NCSA of weather-related cancellations due to field condemnation will be established seasonally by the NCSA Board and notification posted online.

Local fields may be condemned for climactic or other reasons by the entity that has custodial responsibility for the field. In addition to notifying NCSA as indicated above, the visiting team must be notified by the home team immediately upon condemnation being known (**no less than three hours before scheduled game time**). In the spirit of sportsmanship, every effort should be made by the home team to inform and speak with the visiting team as soon as possible, in order to prevent unnecessary travel. The Games Conduct Chair(s) may investigate the details of the condemnation, and possibly award a forfeit win to the visiting team and/or other penalty to the home team. Whether the visiting team was forced to travel unnecessarily will be a factor in calculating any penalties. The Games Conduct Chair(s) may direct that the game be made up at the visiting team's field in such instances. When a local field is condemned, the Games Chair(s) and opponent coach(es) must be contacted immediately by the Club Representative. Club-wide field condemnation should be made as far in advance as possible.

In such cases, if the home team has an alternate local field at the same starting time, or within 30 minutes prior or 30 minutes after the original scheduled game time, and at least 3 hours' notice of the change in time/location is given, then the game **must** be played at the alternate field. If the home team does not have an available field, and the away team has a field available on the same date, it may be requested for home team to play that game on the visiting team's field.

If a team's field is condemned and the teams agree to play on the same date at the home team's field or at the opponent's field outside the parameters permitted above and at a time later than the originally scheduled time, they may do so provided the clubs/teams notify the Games Chair in advance of the game. The assigned referee or referees are permitted to officiate the game at the

new time and location. Teams should be aware that the referee(s) may not be available to do so; in such case Rule [6.7](#) NON- APPEARANCE BY REFEREE is applicable for teams to agree upon a referee as it may not be possible for a referee assignor to assign another referee or referees. Use of this procedure is subject to the following:

- A. Once the league marks a game as TBS(R) the game will not be played on that date.
- B. Requests to the league to determine IF a referee can be assigned to the new time and location will not be responded to as the rule requires agreement of the teams to play as noted above before any attempt to assign officials will be made and compliance with Rule [6.7](#) if no referee is assigned/appears.
- C. Once notice is given to NCSA that the game is rescheduled to the new field and time, the teams may not refuse to play at that time and place. All sanctions for not playing will apply, including payment of referee fees for the scheduled time.
- D. **Home team must NOT notify Games Chair(s) of field condemnation nor utilize any automated system for marking game as field condemned (game postponement) until it has been determined that no alternate scheduling will occur.**
- E. When home team notifies league that its field is condemned and games are not being played, it is also certifying compliance with the above procedure, including specifically that there will be no alternate scheduling of the game on that date pursuant to this rule.

In the event a field is condemned, and submission per posted league procedure is made 3 hours before game time, then there is no obligation to meet the officials nor to pay them. If submission is made after that timeframe, the home team's representative must meet the referee at the scheduled field to inform the referee (a) if the game is moved and to determine if the referee's schedule permits the referee to officiate the moved match or (b) if no other field or the referee cannot officiate the moved match, then to pay \$25 travel fee per assigned referee. When multiple games are scheduled for that field, the referee shall only be paid the travel fee for the first game that referee was assigned on that club's fields. If a field is condemned after games have begun on a field, the travel fee does not apply to the game in progress but does apply to the next game even if the same referee(s). The club has the responsibility to determine if different referees are assigned to later games, which referees are entitled to the same fee. Only referees that appear at the condemned field are entitled to the \$25 travel fee. If a referee is not met at the field to be paid the travel fee for a cancelled game due to weather, then the referee may claim the entire game fee, not just the travel fee, via unpaid referee fee claim if he submits his claim within 24 hours of the original game time, which will be paid by the home team club in addition to the fee of \$75 per referee unpaid fee claim

5.3.5 TBS Games

Clubs/teams may request that any game not be scheduled for specific dates and such games will be marked "To Be Scheduled" (TBS) if they are requested online within the time frame established and published by the NCSA Board each season. A club will be allocated one TBS game for each team they have registered with the NCSA for the Fall season, and two TBS games for each team they have registered with the NCSA for the Spring season in which they are requesting a TBS. The club may divide this allocation as it sees fit. In other words, a club could distribute all of its TBS games to a single team. If a club needs more than its allocated share of TBS games, it can purchase additional games at a cost of \$50 each.

- **TBS on initial Schedule --- All TBS games listed in the initial NCSA Schedule are to be scheduled within 4 weeks from the first game played of the season or there shall be a fine of \$100. While the games must be scheduled within 4 weeks, those games can be played at any time during the course of the season.**

- **TBS added during the season** -- All games marked as TBS during the season due to changes to the schedule as detailed in section 5.3.6a must be scheduled within 2 weeks from game becoming a (TBS) or there shall be a \$100 fine.
- **TBS Automatically scheduled** -- After week 6 of the season a TBS game may be automatically scheduled by NCSA Games Chair(s).
- **TBS in Playoff-MBOS Flights** -- All such TBS games must be played no later than 7 days before Playoffs, MBOS or Position Play if MBOS or Position Play is part of the schedule (including playoff divisions). If MBOS or Position Play is not part of the schedule, then the TBS must be played by the end of the applicable season. For Playoff, MBOS and Position Play Flights, if a TBS is not played by 7 days before the start of such play, the game(s) will not count towards standings for seeding.

5.3.6 Changes to Schedule

There will be no fee charged to the requesting team for changes to scheduled game(s) date and time, or a re-scheduled game date and time, provided the earlier of such dates is at least 5 days later and submitted before Monday 11am if for the upcoming weekend (even if such Monday is a holiday). A schedule change will only be granted if both coaches agree to the change, in writing, and a re-scheduled date with the time and field location accompanies the request. If a re-scheduled match creates a "hole" or "gap" in the schedule for referee assignment purposes, on either the date being moved from or the date being moved to (including field changes causing same), then the team initiating the change will be responsible for the referee fees for the original game that was scheduled. The team initiating the change must be identified in the game change request; if no team is specifically identified, the home team will be responsible for the referee fees for the hole or gap in the schedule. A hole or gap in the schedule takes into account coordination of fields in the same or neighboring complexes, not just the specific field being played on. It is the responsibility of the team initiating the change to pay the referees the entire fee for the game (both team's share) electronically on or before game time. Failure to do so will result in the referees filing an unpaid ref claim and a fine of an additional fee of \$75 per referee to the responsible team.

5.3.6a Change to Schedule Without a New Date

A team may request a change from a scheduled date to a TBS simply for personal preference, provided the opponent agrees in writing. All fees and fines related to schedule changes shall apply such as timely rescheduling under 5.3.5, creating holes or gaps under 5.3.6, timeliness under 5.3.7 and/or additional fees under 5.3.7a. There will be an additional \$250 fine for not playing the game by the end of the season unless there is an agreement by both teams and the Division Commissioner to not play the game.

5.3.7 Rescheduling Games / Games Change Requests

Schedule changes, whether automatic or requested, will only be accepted by an online Games Change Request, as prescribed by the Games Chair(s). **Games Change Requests must be submitted online to the league a minimum of 5 days in advance for weekday game or by 11:00 AM on Monday for any weekend game. The deadlines apply even if there is a holiday or weekend in the time frame.** Games Change Request shall be submitted online and only by a Club Representative and must contain all information including but not limited to which club is requesting the change and which club is responsible for all associated fees; if no team is specifically identified, the home team will be responsible for the fees. If the rescheduling of a game is for any reason other than an automatic postponement, as detailed in [5.3.1](#), the game must be played within 2 weeks of the date originally scheduled.

All reasonable efforts should be made to reschedule the game at the time of postponement if the reason is an automatic postponement under [5.3.1](#), which must be stated in the online request. If the postponement of a game is for any other reason, the rescheduled date and reason for postponement must be set forth in the comment box in the online Game Change Request. The Games Chair(s) will determine if the stated reason meets the criteria for automatic postponement if that is the reason claimed. If a change is requested under [5.3.6](#), then the Games Chair(s) will determine if the stated agreement of the opposing team is noted in the request and if all steps have been followed as detailed herein, then Games Chair(s) will approve request. If any change is rejected, the reason will be stated in the rejection comments. In all cases, the person submitting the online Games Change Request is certifying to the league that: (a) if a postponement is not automatic, the opponent coach has agreed to the request; (b) if a postponement is automatic, the opponent coach has already been notified; and (c) if a rescheduled date is set forth, such date, time and location has been agreed upon with the opponent coach before submission of the form. Any violation of this rule will result in a fine to the offending club of \$75, non-acceptance by the Games Chair(s) of future online Games Change Requests for all teams in that Club, and a forfeit given to the offending team.

The two teams in a postponed game must attempt to agree upon a mutually acceptable game time. If the teams cannot agree, then the Division Commissioner will intervene and attempt to arbitrate an agreement. If the arbitration described above is not successful, the Division Commissioner must notify the Games Chair(s) who will schedule the game at a site and time of his/her choice. In flights where MBOS or Position Play occurs (or playoff divisions), makeup games that are not played at least 7 days before MBOS or Position Play begins will not count for seeding, even if played later. Games not scheduled timely by the teams will be scheduled by the Games Chair(s) on as little as 48 hours' notice.

Games Change Requests shall be submitted online and only by a Club Representative and must contain all information including but not limited to which club is requesting the change, whether the change meets the test for an automatic postponement under ROC, whether any other facts apply that would affect assessment or lack of assessment of fees associated with the game change and which club is responsible for all associated fees. Reliance upon prior email or other communications about the change are insufficient unless reference to them is made in the game change request.

5.3.7a. Late Requests For Game Changes

Game schedules become "final" for referee assignment purposes 5 days in advance for weekday games and on Monday 11am for upcoming weekend games. This schedule allows for efficient assignment if available officials to maximize coverage for all games.

If a game change request is received after the above deadline, then the following additional assigning fees (for the additional work associated with a change after the assigning process started for that date) are due from the team/club initiating the change, no matter who is the home team and those additional assigning fees will be in addition to the obligation to pay for holes or gaps if any exist. The fees apply to the "changed from" date and the "changed to" date if both are past the deadline:

Weekend Games:

Before Monday 11 am – No additional fees

After Monday 11 am and before Tuesday 11 am - \$35

After Tuesday 11 am and before Wednesday 11 am - \$60

After Wednesday 11am and before Thursday 11am - \$85

After Thursday 11 am - \$125

Weekday Games (days are counted not including the day of the game)

At least the 5th day or earlier prior to the game day – no additional fee

4th day prior to the game day - \$35

3rd day prior to the game - \$60

2nd day prior to the game - \$85

Day prior to the game day or on the game day - \$125

5.3.8 Change to start time, due to field conflicts, and/or to accommodate “Cup Games”

If a club has a field conflict, a club may move the scheduled games on that field, or to another field up to an hour time change, without consent of the opposing team, however the following requirements must be met:

- Opposing team must be communicated with by email, by three (3) full calendar days prior to the game. (i.e. If Saturday game, email must be sent by Tuesday; if Sunday game, email must be sent by Wednesday).
- Email must be sent to opposing coach, Club Rep, and Division Commissioner listed on NCSA website.
- Consent of the opponent is not required to submit a change per Rule 5.3.8.
- All other requirements for submission and effect of late submissions apply.

5.3.9 Late Game Cancellation or Change

If a scheduled game is cancelled late (after the deadline in [5.3.7](#) Monday 11:00 am for weekend games and 5 days in advance for weekday games), it is the responsibility of the team cancelling late to pay the referees the entire fee for the game (both team's share) electronically on or before game time. Failure to do so will result in the referees filing an unpaid ref claim and a fine of an additional fee of \$75 per referee to the cancelling team. An additional assigning fee of \$35 is due for the additional work associated with communicating with the officials. If the officials can be reassigned, the amount owed will only be the balance of the original fees less the fee for the reassignment, if any.

5.3.10 Added Games

Clubs may request that NCSA add to its online schedule additional games for the purpose of having referees assigned by the NCSA Referee Assignors. Examples of such games are Cup, non-NCSA other league and friendly games. All such added game scheduling and referee payments must comply with all NCSA rules or will be subject to the same fines and fees as set forth in these rules. For Cup games, the requesting club must specify online the specific type of Cup competition (in order for officials to know which rules apply) and the name of opponent (for example, NJYS National Cup-Marlboro or US Club Cup-Morris). For other non-NCSA league games, the requesting club must specify the league, which passes apply and name of opponent

(for example, EDP-NJYS-Howell or EDP-US Club-Hibernia). For friendly games between 2 NCSA teams, the teams must be specified. While Rules of Competition for Cup or other league games will govern the match itself, by requesting the addition of the game to the NCSA site for referee assignment, the requesting club is agreeing to all administrative rules and fees governing NCSA game scheduling and referee assignment. The requesting club is also agreeing to pay to NCSA the cost of Referee Assignor fees plus \$1.00 per assigned referee per game.

5.4 OFFICIAL GAMES

Only games officially scheduled by the Games Chair(s) and played at the dates and times scheduled shall be recognized by the NCSA. Games may be postponed or otherwise delayed only for reasons described in these rules of competition. Under no circumstances may Clubs or teams assign referees to games at scheduled or unscheduled times. There will be a \$100 fine and potential disciplinary action taken against the club and coach who schedules and/or plays a game, or schedules and/or uses a referee other than as assigned by the NCSA. In the event a referee scheduled by NCSA does not arrive at a properly scheduled game, refer to Rule [6.7](#) (Nonappearance by Referee)

Clubs and coaches should be aware that USSF requires all games (official, friendlies, scrimmages, etc.) to have referees assigned only by licensed USSF assignors so that insurance coverage is applicable to the game. If an official NCSA game cannot be played due to failure of a team to have required documentation (see Rule [6.4](#)), the referees are still entitled to payment but are **NOT** permitted by USSF policy to officiate any scrimmage or other activity in place of the NCSA game.

5.5 FRIENDLY GAMES/SCRIMMAGES

Any other games using an official and scheduled by the NCSA shall be deemed as "friendly games". However, all of the NCSA Rules of Competition shall apply, and all games **MUST** be played once scheduled by the NCSA. Scrimmages are permitted if allowed by US Club rules; only proof of US Club registration is required for scrimmages.

5.6 WITHDRAWAL FROM COMPETITION

If a team withdraws, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, the result of all games played up to the point of withdrawal shall be removed from the scoring and league standings by the Division Commissioner and it shall be as though the team was never in the competition.

5.7 STANDINGS

Only NCSA sanctioned games will be recognized in determining points for league play. All Matches Based on Standings (MBOS), Position Play and Playoff Flights will be determined by the Games Chair(s) with the approval of the NCSA Board before the beginning of the season. This format will be published as part of the schedule. If a team is assessed a forfeit during the season it may not be eligible for awards or inclusion in the top four seeding in any MBOS and/or playoff tournament. At the discretion of the Games Chair(s), and the appropriate Division Commissioner, the team may still be flighted where appropriate for the level of competition. The team, however, may be ineligible for an award.

5.7.1 Points

Points will accumulate as follows:

- Win 3 points
- Tie 1 point
- Loss 0 points

Forfeited games shall be recorded as a 1-0 score in favor of the team that did not forfeit.

5.7.2 Playoff--MBOS Flights-Other 7 or 8 team flights

In all flights of 7 or 8 teams, each team plays all other teams once during the first 7 weeks of the season. The Games Chair(s) and applicable Division Commissioner will determine the type of flight to determine how the last 3 weeks of the season are scheduled.

First option is a full schedule of 10 games, with each team playing 3 other teams a second time at random, typically repeating weeks 1, 2 and 3 of the schedule. In such flights, only the second time the teams play counts for standings. The game that counts is the second game played between the two teams. The game number or date of play on the original schedule released by the Games Chair(s) does not dictate the game that counts. The second game actually played is the result that is used for final standing purposes.

Second option is a Playoff Flight, with the opponents for the last 3 weeks being determined Based on Standings (MBOS) from the first 7 games as long as they are played by the Sunday of the 7th week of play. Based on the total points, teams will be divided into two brackets: the Award Bracket – the top 4 teams based on total points and the Consolation Bracket – all other teams. Only teams in the Award Bracket will be eligible to win the Flight; only the points from the Award Bracket playoff/MBOS round-robin will count for final standings purposes. In the event of a tie in points, see Rule 5.7.4 for tie-breakers. These procedures apply to both the Award and Consolation brackets: All teams in a Playoff or MBOS flight must have all of their games played by the end of week 7 of the season; if any game is not played by that date, then such game(s) may be played later but will not be counted towards seeding. Playoff/MBOS round games will be scheduled in weeks 8, 9 and 10 and all games must be played by the end of the season. The schedule for weeks 8, 9 and 10 must be set by 11:00am on the Monday preceding the weekend in which the teams are scheduling the game (typical TBS game scheduling); games scheduled after the Monday deadline (or under 5 days in advance) may not have officials assigned as the games were not scheduled timely.

In the event that a Playoff or MBOS game in week 8, 9 or 10 ends in a draw (tie) the game will advance to:

Penalty Kick Shoot-Out:

- In the event the score is tied after regulation in weeks 8, 9 or 10, penalty kicks (KFTM) will be taken to determine the winner. The penalty kick shootout may not be played unless full regulation time has been played.
- Only those players on the field at the end of the game may compete.
- Each team will designate 5 players to take shots in an ABABABABAB pattern, until a decisive result is reached.
- If the penalty kick score is tied at the end of five kicks, teams will continue to take penalty kicks, alternately, in matched pairs until there is a winner.
- All players on the field must take a penalty kick before any player is allowed to kick a second time.

If the penalty kick shootout cannot be completed due to weather, lack of lighting or similar extraordinary circumstances, then the game, if official under Rule 8.2.4, will remain a tie.

5.7.3 Nine (9) or Ten (10) team Flights

At the discretion of the Games Chair(s), in a 9 or 10 team flight, an additional game against a team selected at random may be scheduled to create a 10 week schedule. If so, only the second time the teams play will count for standings. See Rule 5.7.4 for the tiebreaker procedure.

5.7.4 Ties at End of Season / For Seeding

1. In the event of a tie in points in Divisions 1 through 4, at the end of the season or during the season (such as to determine seeding) the following tiebreakers will apply:
 - a. Head to head competition (applies only if 2 teams are tied; if 3 or more teams are tied in points, use the following basis in order to determine 3rd or lower position among tied teams and always start here again to break remaining ties);
 - b. Total wins
 - c. Least goals against (average per game even if uneven games played)
 - d. Higher goal differential
 - e. Co-champions
2. In the event of a tie for first place in Division 5 and Division 6, all teams tied with the most points will be deemed co-champions and given first place awards, if awards are given as set forth in Rule 5.8.

5.7.5 Cross Flight Play

At the discretion of the Games Chair(s), teams may be scheduled to play opposing teams in other flights or age groups. The sole purpose is to provide a full season of play and prevent byes in flights with a limited number or odd number of teams. These games do not count toward the standings within either team's flight and no points are awarded. These games are regarded as "friendly games" only. However, all of the NCSA Rules of Competition shall apply, and all games MUST be played once scheduled by the NCSA. Furthermore, if a team does forfeit a scheduled cross flight game, it will be ineligible for award competition within their flight and will receive other fines associated with the forfeit.

5.8 AWARDS

NCSA will present awards (trophies, shirts, patches, etc.) as determined by the NCSA Board for each season. As per Rule 9.5 only teams that belong to Clubs that are in Good Standing with the NCSA shall be eligible for any awards or to be declared a winner of a flight.

5.9 LENGTH OF GAMES AND BALL SIZE

Division	Game Length	Ball Size
1 (U17-U19)	90 minutes (two 45 minute halves)	No. 5 ball
2 (U15 & U16)	80 minutes (two 40 minute halves)	No. 5 ball
3 (U13-U14)	80 minutes (two 40 minute halves)	No. 4 ball for U13 No 5 ball for U14
4 (U11-U12)	70 minutes (two 35 minute halves)	No. 4 ball
5 (U9-U10)	60 minutes (two 30 minute halves)	No. 4 ball
6 (U8)	48 minutes (four 12 minute quarters)	No. 3 ball

Division 1-5: If stoppages for hydration breaks occur during a game, a maximum of 1 minute may be added to duration of match at the discretion of the referee.

5.10 SPECIAL RULES FOR U8, 4 v 4; U9/U10, 7 v 7; & U11/U12, 9 v 9 GROUP PLAY

The following revisions to the rules of the game shall apply to small sided games (violations of these dimensions must be reported to the NCSA by the referee and opposing coach, but games should be played unless the violation is egregious):

1. The field of play:
 - a. U8 shall be a minimum of 20 yards and a maximum of 25 yards wide. The length of the field shall be a minimum of 30 yards and a maximum of 35 yards.
 - b. U9/U10 shall be a minimum of 35 yards and a maximum of 50 yards wide. The length of field shall be a minimum of 55 yards & maximum of 65 yards in length.
 - c. U11/U12 shall be a minimum of 45 yards and a maximum of 55 yards wide. The length of field shall be a minimum of 70 yards & maximum of 80 yards in length.
 - d. U13-U15 I Flights (7 v 7) U9/U10 shall be a minimum of 45 yards and a maximum of 54 yards wide. The length of field shall be a minimum of 70 yards & maximum of 80 yards in length.
2. The goal area shall be six yards from each goal post and six yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The penalty area shall be marked 12 yards from each goal post and 12 yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel to the goal line. Penalty kicks are marked at 10 yards from the goal line.
3. Goal size:
 - a. U8 the recommended goal size shall be 6 feet in width and 4 feet in height.
 - b. U9/U10 shall be minimum width of 12 feet and maximum width of 18-1/2 feet. The minimum height shall be 6 feet and maximum height shall be 6-1/2 to 7 feet high
 - c. U11/U12 shall be minimum width of 18 feet and maximum width of 21 feet. The minimum height shall be 6-1/2 feet and maximum height shall be 7 feet high
 - d. U13-U15 I Flights (7 v 7) shall be minimum width of 18 feet and maximum width of 21 feet. The minimum height shall be 6-1/2 feet and maximum height shall be 7 feet high
4. Maximum/Minimum number of players on the field at any one time:

- a. U8 shall be four per team, no goalkeeper (players are not permitted to stand in front of the goal as a goaltender) and no less than 3 to play/continue the game.
 - i. Either team may substitute players on the fly
 - b. U9/U10 shall be seven per team, including a designated goalkeeper and no less than 5 to play/continue the game.
 - c. U11/U12 shall be nine per team, including a designated goalkeeper and no less than 6 to play/continue the game.
 - d. U13-U19 shall be eleven per team, including a designated goalkeeper and no less than 7 to play/continue the game.
 - e. U13-U15 I Flights (7 v 7) shall be seven per team, including a designated goalkeeper and no less than 5 to play/continue the game.
5. The NCSA will adhere to the USSF recommendation, and US Club requirement, to eliminate heading the ball with all U11 and younger teams. When a player deliberately heads the ball in a U11 and younger game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

5.10.1 Build Out Line for U8, 4 v 4 & U9/U10, 7 v 7 Group Play

The build-out line as defined by US Soccer promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting. The build out line is subject to the following rules within the NCSA:

MARKING THE BUILD OUT LINE:

The build out line is to be placed halfway between the center line and the penalty area line. It may be (a) painted at the touchline or extended by a dashed line across the field (preferably in a different color than the field lines) or (b) marked by low cones, flat soft and pliable markers or flags at least one yard off the field from the touchline. If no markers are provided by the host club, then the referee shall designate the build out line in any reasonable manner other than painting.

- a. U8 build out line shall be the halfway line of the field.
- b. U9/U10 build out line shall be marked on each side of field equidistant between the penalty area line and the halfway line.

OFFSIDE

The build out line on the attacking part of the field replaces the halfway line as the point behind which a player cannot be in an offside position.

- a. U8 – No offsides in U8 play.

GOAL KICKS:

The team not taking the goal kick must retreat behind the build out line on a goal kick. The team taking the goal kick may not take the goal kick until the opposing team has moved behind the build out line. The opposing team may not come past the build out line until the ball is in play: Which is defined as when the ball is kicked and moves.

- a. U8 goal kicks are taken from the end line.

KEEPER SAVES – NO QUICK RELEASE

The opposing team must retreat behind the build out line on a keeper save. The keeper is permitted to wait until the opposing team does so and the 6 second limitation on keeper possession does not start until the opposing team retreats behind the build out line. The opposing team, having moved behind the build out line, may cross the build out line once the keeper releases the ball from in hand possession.

KEEPER SAVES – QUICK RELEASE

The opposing team must always make a good faith effort to retreat behind the build out line on a keeper save. The keeper is permitted to release the ball from in hand possession before the opponents retreat behind the build out line. In such cases, the opponents may not challenge the ball until (a) the keeper has placed the ball at his or her feet or (b) the keeper has released the ball to a teammate and the teammate has had an opportunity to receive the ball without pressure. In such cases, the opponent need not retreat behind the build out line before becoming involved with play.

VIOLATIONS BY OPPOSING TEAM

If an opponent violates the prohibitions above on a goal kick or keeper release, the referee must stop play and award an IFK at the spot of the infraction to the team entitled to the protections of the build out line rule.

KEEPER SAVES – LIMITATION ON KEEPER

The goalkeeper may not punt or drop kick the ball. If the keeper does so, the referee must stop play and award an IFK to the opposing team from the spot of the infraction, subject to Law 13.

DEFENSIVE TEAM FREE KICKS WITHIN BUILD OUT LINE

Normal FK distance rules apply. The build out line is not applicable to free kicks.

5.10.2 Special Rules for U8 Play

Size of teams -

- a. A maximum game day roster 12 players make up a team for a 4 v 4 small sided game.
- b. One game per rostered team will be played per the scheduled game. *(If you should have more than 12 players per team then it is suggested you create and register a second team.)*
- c. Game will be 48 minutes with 4 12 minute quarters.

Kickins/Throwins:

- a. U8 shall take kickins during the fall season. Kickins shall be taken from the touchline and opposing teams shall retreat to at least 2 yards from the kickin.
- b. U8 shall take throw-ins during the spring season. Throw-ins shall be taken from the touch line opposing teams shall retreat to at least 2 yards from the throwin. Players may be allowed two additional attempts at the throw-ins.

Reporting Scores:

Scores will be kept and reported to the league within 4 hours of the completion of the game. The winning team should report the score. In the case of a tie the home teams will report the score. If the score is not recorded within 4 hours, or if the score is incorrect, the offending team(s) may be subject to a \$25 fine.

Excessive Scoring:

In an effort to limit excessive scoring, a team that is down by 3 goals may add a player. As soon as the goal differential is 2 goals the additional player must be removed and a 4v4 format shall resume.

Any team that wins a game with a greater than 7-goal differential, the head coach may need to appear before the Games Conduct Committee and may be assessed a minimum of \$25 fine and may also be assessed a 1 game suspension.

5.10.3 Special Rules For Small Sided Play At Private Facilities

Upon application of a club or facility, the Board may approve on a seasonal basis the use of a private indoor (or a private outdoor) artificial turf facility that substantially but not exactly meets the minimum requirements set forth in Section [5.10 \(2\)](#) and (3). The intent of this rule is to provide alternate playing facilities for clubs that have limited access to home fields or as an alternative for make-up games and rain closures of grass fields. If used as an alternate site upon a field being closed for rain, the minimum notice to the NCSA of the alternate field (while it is still the home team's "home" game, the field is treated as not being in the home club's location) shall be 24 hours in order to be in compliance with Rule [5.3.6](#). If used as a regular play date or make-up game, normal submission rules apply. All terms of use shall be as approved by the Board.

5.10.4 Special Rules for U13-U15 I Flight (7v7 small sided)

For the U13-U15 I flight (7 v7 small sided) there shall be no punting by the goalie. Further, on any goal kick the ball must touch either the ground or a player before crossing the half. The restart for a punt by the goalie is an indirect free kick from a point outside of the penalty area. The restart for a goal kick crossing the half without touching a player or the ground first is an indirect free kick from the half line.

5.10.5 The field of play 11v11:

It is recommended that for U13 - 19 the field shall be a minimum of 100 yards and a maximum of 120 yards in length. The width of the field shall be a minimum of 60 yards and a maximum of 80 yards. Additional details can be found under "Forms" on the NCSA web site.

5.11 APPAREL

5.11.1 Mandatory Apparel

Before the start of play, the referee shall inspect all players for correct apparel. All field players must wear acceptable and nominally identical uniforms consisting of shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards, and suitable footwear. Each player must be identified by a different number on his/her jersey. The height of the numerals shall be a minimum of 6 inches. Goalkeepers must wear a uniform distinctively different from the other players on both teams, along with shin guards, socks and suitable footwear. The goalkeeper may wear long trousers and/or a non-dangerous cap. No player will be allowed upon the field who is not properly equipped.

5.11.2 Illegal Apparel

The referee will examine footwear and disqualify any footwear that does not conform to IFAB Law IV. Hooded sweatshirts (unless tucked under the shirt) or headgear, including bandannas or caps with sharp or stiff peaks (as well as any other apparel the referee deems dangerous) shall not be

worn. Sweatpants tucked under socks may be worn when the referee deems warranted by severe weather conditions. The referee's judgment is final with regard to additional apparel.

5.11.3 Jewelry

Jewelry (including earrings) whether visible to the naked eye or not must be removed by all players before they enter onto the field.

5.11.4 Protective Padding

Only goalkeepers may wear kneepads in addition to regular uniforms. Goalkeepers may not wear any other form of padding other than that contained in a regulation goalkeeper's shirt and shorts. No form of padding is allowed on field players, other than as specified below. In the event player injury demands support or protection, only properly designed support bandages of tubular or linear construction may be used. No form of padding designed for any other sport may be worn on the field of play. Hard casts and splints must be wrapped or padded by cushioning material to allow for safe play. It is recommended that casts and hard splints be covered with closed cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than 1/2-inch thick; however, other padding or wrapping may suffice. The padded or covered cast or splint must be deemed safe per referee discretion; because the padding or covering may not be identical from game to game, the referee has the final decision on game day at the field. Any other protective devices approved by IFAB or USSF are also permitted.

5.12 BEHAVIOR OF COACHES AND SPECTATORS

Coaches are expected to stay in their bench area and are not to travel up and down the length of their side. The bench area is defined as starting 5 yards from the halfway line and extending to 5 yards past a stationary bench.

If a stationary bench is not available, then the bench area cannot extend more than approximately 15 yards (full sided) or 10 yards (small sided), starting 5 yards from the halfway line. Coaches and spectators must stay 2 yards away from the sideline.

Spectators cannot move into the area adjacent to the penalty area nor take an off-field position behind either goal line. Club linesmen (if used) must be adults and perform the duties assigned to them by the referee to the extent permitted by IFAB/USSF. As match officials, they are prohibited from coaching and under NO circumstances should a coach perform duties of a referee and/or assistant referee during their game. Offensive language or unruly behavior by coaches, players, and spectators will not be tolerated. Both the visiting and home coaches are responsible for the conduct of all persons on their teams and their respective spectators. Proper sportsmanship is expected throughout all NCSA activities. No person is permitted to smoke or consume alcoholic beverages during a practice or game when players are present. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in a \$50 fine per incident.

Under NO circumstances may coaches wear any form of referee's apparel on the sidelines to coach a team. Referees assigned to games where this occurs should report this to the Games Conduct Chairman and disciplinary action may be taken.

In the event of disorderly conduct, the referee shall be the sole judge of the situation. The referee will indicate to the respective coaches the action that is required. The referee may at his/her discretion suspend play or abandon the game. If the referee abandons the game because of misconduct of players, coaches, or spectators, the Games Conduct Committee shall determine the result of the game (score stands, replay, or forfeit).

5.12.1 Zero Tolerance Policy

Dissent or disagreement with any calls or non-calls by the officials in any manner is not only prohibited, but also results in a caution to the offending player (and under NCSA Rules of Conduct, to a coach for his/her behavior and that of the team's spectators).

Dissent is committed by words, actions (including gestures), or a combination of the two. Any comments or demonstrations that a call should or shouldn't be made is prohibited. Treat the officials with respect. NCSA prohibits dissent of any type, by word or action, **even if you are right**.

The NCSA has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy towards any displayed or verbal disagreement with any calls or non-calls and all decisions of officials by players, coaches and spectators (for whom coaches are responsible). The NCSA has a mechanism for coaches to express their approval or disapproval of officiating, including detailed explanations for such opinion, which occurs AFTER the game online. Statements and actions which do not follow this policy are prohibited and must be sanctioned by officials.

Any fines or suspensions associated with conduct directed at or about a minor referee shall be enhanced.

THE STATEMENT ABOVE IN [5.12.1](#) IS INTENDED TO EDUCATE AND REMIND COACHES OF CURRENT LAWS OF THE GAME AND THE NCSA RULES OF COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS

6. GAME PROCEDURES

6.1 PRE-GAME ARRANGEMENTS

The visiting team shall call, email or otherwise contact the home team at least 96 hours (4 days) before game time to check team colors, game time and field location or changes. If the visiting coach has not initiated contact, the home coach is advised to contact the visiting coach to ensure there are no mix-ups regarding fields, times, uniform colors, etc.

6.1.1 Team Colors

All home teams are expected to wear the uniform colors that are registered with the NCSA. Visiting team must wear uniforms that do not conflict with the home team's registered colors. If the home team is wearing its registered colors and a clash occurs, the visiting team shall resolve the conflict within the allowed grace period. If a conflict results because the home team is not wearing its registered colors, the home team shall resolve the conflict within the allowed grace period.

6.2 HOME CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

It is always the responsibility of the club who provides the playing field to ensure that the field and surrounding location is safe to play the game without any risk of injury to any player, coach, referee, or spectator. The field shall be marked and equipped in accordance with IFAB and NCSA Rules including a spectator line that must be parallel to the touchline and extending from end line to end line. Note that the NCSA Rules of Competition provide that no spectators are allowed from the top of the penalty area, 18 or 12 yard line respectively for full and small sided, to the end line on each end of the field. The spectator line shall be greater than 6 feet but need not be greater than 10 feet from the touchline. The home club is responsible for providing and installing the goal, goal nets, and corner flags. All goals must be anchored in accordance with the instructions of the

manufacturer. The home club shall also provide a game ball of specified size, properly inflated, and must also ensure that a suitable substitute ball(s) is available. The home club shall remove all debris from the field before the game. The referee may at his/her discretion allow the game to be played in spite of marginal noncompliance of the field and will report to the Games Conduct Chair(s) accordingly. If the degree of noncompliance is such that the referee refuses to officiate the game, he/she will file a report with the Games Conduct Chair(s), which is empowered to declare the game a forfeit.

6.2.1 Temporary Field Marking on Artificial Turf Fields

In order to allow for small sided games to be played on artificial turf fields where permanent (sewn or painted) or temporary (chalk or chalk paint) lines are not permitted, temporary markers of rubber, vinyl or other safe material may be permitted to delineate boundary lines of the field, goal area, penalty area, midfield and buildout lines.

6.3 LOCATION OF BENCHES, TEAM PERSONNEL, AND SPECTATORS

Before the game, teams (including their players and carded coaches) shall take positions on the same side of the field. The teams and the coaches are separated by the "halfway" or "midfield" line plus 5 yards each side of the midfield line which is reserved for the officials and substitutes who are up and ready. All others, spectators and parents are to be on the opposite side of the field. If the game is played in a stadium style field with bleachers that are a minimum of 10 yards behind the benches and separated by a fence, then spectators are allowed to sit in the bleachers behind the team benches as long as this does not conflict with site rules and requirements. (Spectators are not allowed within the area adjacent to the penalty areas or behind either end line). Only carded coaches are to coach the players. The home team has first field choice and the visiting team must take the alternative. At no time may players, coaches, or other team personnel and/or spectators take up an off-field position behind either goal line or on their opponent's half of the field.

6.4 TEAM ROSTERS, PASSES AND MATCH DAY FORM

Each team shall have their player and coach passes and have fully completed online the NCSA Match Day form and US Club Roster; players carded to the team MUST be on the printed US Club NCSA roster. All information on the roster must be current. If a player shows as EXPIRED or NO CARD or anything other than a valid expiration date, the player will not be permitted to play. No team may have more than 4 coaches during a game; all must be listed on the NCSA Match Day form but need not be listed on the US Club NCSA roster. Coaches may be inserted online before the game on the NCSA Match Day form. For clarity, if the roster indicates NO CARD next to a coaches name, but the coach has a valid US Club card for the club that is participating in the game, and if the coach appears on the NCSA Match Day form, then the coach will be permitted to participate in the game. Only carded coaches, within his or her own club, who are listed as a Contact for the Club within the NCSA database and are listed on the Match Day form may coach or give direction/instruction to the players in a game.

Those players not playing, if listed on the US Club NCSA roster, must be reported by the referee as not playing. Players who are playing up must be listed on the NCSA Match Day form in the section provided before check-in for the game by the referee.

A late arriving player whose name is on the roster or NCSA Match Day form may be checked in at an appropriate time as determined by the referee.

GAME DAY PROCEDURE: (Detailed game day checklist available at: www.ncsanj.com)

- EACH Team prepares online NCSA Match Day form for that specific game (all game info is automatically inserted at top) – each team lists its own coaches and players playing up (where applicable).
- Each team will have submitted to NCSA for uploading a current US Club NCSA roster that has been league verified and watermarked per Rule [3.5.b](#). At the U8 division level where there will not be a referee the coaches shall exchange rosters and NCSA Match Day forms.
- Any player(s) playing up from other NCSA registered teams within that club per NCSA Rule [4.5](#) must be listed on the NCSA Match Day form. Only players meeting the requirements of Rule 4.5 may play up in an NCSA league game - there are no other "guest" players.
- The US Club NCSA rosters must include the uniform number of the players and must be accurate
- Opponent coaches have access to a team's NCSA Match Day form and roster online, so none are physically exchanged at the game.
- If a copy of US Club NCSA roster of one or both teams is not available online for the referee, the game will not be played. Referee will report what occurred; referee is still entitled to his/her fee from both teams. At the U8 level coaches will report to the league that the game was not played.
- If the NCSA Match Day form of one or both teams is not available online for the referee, game will not be played. Referee will report what occurred; referee is still entitled to his/her fee from both teams.
- If a player or coach does not have a valid NCSA issued US Club pass, that person may not play or coach (whichever is applicable). Only laminated passes are valid.

A team that fails to have available online both a US Club NCSA roster AND a NCSA Match Day form may be charged with a forfeit (based on NCSA Games Conduct ruling). The Games Conduct Committee may investigate the details of the forfeit, and possibly rule to remove the forfeit and to have the game to be rescheduled at the non-offending team's home field.

6.5 PASS INSPECTION

Each team shall present their player and coach passes to the referee. Referees will hold the passes during the game. Both teams shall be ready for coach and player inspection fifteen minutes before kick-off time. A coach creating the NCSA Match Day form is acknowledging the NCSA Rules of Competition and certifying they have valid player/coach passes. Any player arriving after the kick-off must present a player's pass to the referee before being allowed to enter the game. Such player must be listed on the roster originally presented.

At the U8 level each team shall hold their own coach and player passes.

6.6 GRACE PERIOD

Subject to a fine and/or disciplinary action, teams will be allowed fifteen minutes from the designated kick-off time to field the minimum number of players set forth in Rule 5.10. A team that fails to field the minimum number of players by the end of the grace period will be charged with a forfeit. This grace period applies to readiness of the field, including markings and

equipment. Exception: it is the responsibility of every team to have a fully marked and equipped field available at the scheduled kick-off times, and no excuse shall be accepted for lack of same, except where due to injury or similar circumstance a previous game has run beyond its scheduled ending time, thereby preventing the timely start of the following game. Under these conditions, both teams shall wait up to 60 minutes. If the field is not available at the end of that time, the game shall be canceled, and a report submitted by the referee. The referee shall be paid the appropriate fee as if the game was played.

6.7 NON-APPEARANCE BY REFEREE AND/OR ASSISTANT REFEREE (AR)

All assigned officials are expected to be at the field at least 30 minutes in advance of game time, however, the referees are entitled to the same grace period as the teams. At times officials are late solely because they are assigned to successive games at different locations. In such cases, the referees should communicate to the coaches that schedule in advance and should update the coaches if they know they will arrive late. When at least one referee and/or AR has arrived on time, all check-in procedures are to be performed by the attending official in an effort to start the game as close to scheduled time as possible. The below only applies upon conclusion of the grace period, except for B below.

- A. If there is only one official assigned to the game (referee without AR's), the coaches of both teams should agree upon another person or persons to act as a referee for the game who need not be officially registered. The presence of another USSF registered referee that is not assigned to that game does not require the coaches to utilize that person to officiate the game. If agreement cannot be reached, then the game shall be postponed and made up in accordance with Section [5.3.7](#) TBS Games, [5.3.9](#) Rescheduling Games / Games Change Requests and [6.13](#) Incomplete Games. If, however, a USSF referee who is present at the field does commence the game by agreement of the coaches, he/she need not yield to the later arriving assigned referee. The late arriving referee shall not be paid. An agreed upon person who acts as referee but who is not USSF registered must yield to the assigned referee if the assigned referee arrives within 30 minutes of the designated game time. A registered USSF official assuming the responsibility of referee under this section shall be paid, unless the official is affiliated (as defined by USSF) with either team.
- B. If there are 2 or more officials assigned to the game and the referee is present, the game shall begin on time with the AR who is present assuming the AR1 position. The referee may request either team to provide a club linesman whose duties are limited to calling the ball out over a boundary line per USSF policy. If the late arriving AR arrives within 30 minutes of the designated game time, the AR may assume the duties of AR and will be paid. An AR arriving later than 30 minutes shall not be paid but may assume the duties of AR at any time without payment.
- C. If there are 2 or more officials assigned to the game and the assigned referee is not present at the conclusion of the grace period, a single AR present or AR1 if 2 AR's are present will become the referee. If a second AR is present, he/she will act as AR1. The new referee may request either team to provide a club linesman whose duties are limited to calling the ball out over a boundary line per USSF policy. If the late arriving official arrives within 30 minutes of the designated game time, the official may assume the duties of AR2 and will be paid as an AR. An official arriving later than 30 minutes shall not be paid but may assume the duties of AR2 at any time without payment.
- D. If, after applying B or C above, there is no referee, then the coaches may agree upon a replacement according to A above.
- E. In any game in which 3 officials are assigned under current NCSA policy (U11 and above), if there are fewer than 3 officials present, the coaches may agree upon a replacement AR using the same procedure identified in A above. A registered USSF

official assuming the responsibility of AR under this section shall be paid, unless the official is affiliated (as defined by USSF) with either team.

6.8 COIN TOSS

Due to COVID-19 the NCSA has suspended the pre-game coin toss. The home team will have the choice of kicking off or choosing the end of which to attack. If the home team selects an end to attack the visiting team will kick off. Teams switch ends for the second half and the team that did not kick off at the start of the game kicks off to begin the second half.

At the U8 level the visiting team shall kick-off in the 1st and 3rd quarters while the home team shall kick-off in the 2nd and 4th quarters.

6.9 SUBSTITUTION

Substitutions must be up and ready at the halfway line. Substitutions should exit the field on the touchline on the players side of the field on their team's half of the field. Unlimited substitutions shall be permitted any time the ball is out of play under Law 9 subject to approval by the referee.

6.9.1 Protocols & modified substitution rules regarding suspected head injuries

NCSA will adhere to the USSF/US Club Soccer protocol requirement regarding suspected head injuries.

Protocols following suspected head injuries

NCSA requires the immediate removal of any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or who is showing symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion.

If a coach attempts to allow a player who had been removed from a game for concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to return to play by an on-site healthcare professional, the referee should immediately stop play, direct the player to leave the field, instruct the coach to select a substitute and issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists, the referee is entitled to take necessary disciplinary measures against the coach.

For events without an on-site healthcare professional, no coach can permit a player who has been removed from a game for concussion suspicion/assessment to return to play until he/she is cleared by a healthcare professional. Referee responses and actions outlined in the previous paragraph should be taken against any coach who persists in trying to re-insert the player into the game without proper clearance by a healthcare professional.

6.10 STOPPAGE OF GAME DUE TO LIGHTNING, THUNDER, OR PERMIT

All games must be stopped at the first sighting of lightning or sound of thunder. Referees will send all involved in the game off the field. Referee must wait 30 minutes from the last flash of lightning or sound of thunder before players are allowed on field of play to continue the game from the time it was stopped. Be proactive with planning and be aware of local weather conditions before and during the game. Discuss evacuation plan including the identification of appropriate shelters, if available, nearby. If not available, all involved in the game should return to their vehicles. A fully enclosed vehicle with windows rolled-up is reasonable shelter.

If a field is equipped with a lightning detection (reporting) system, any time you hear the horn from the lightning detection system go off, immediately clear the field and seek suitable shelter. Do NOT return to the field until you wait at least 30 minutes and the flashing light on the detector has gone off and no longer illuminated. If at any time you hear thunder or see lightning during the waiting time, the clock resets and you must wait another 30 minutes. Players/Teams will receive notification from the referee when it is safe to return to the field.

If during the 30 minutes waiting time, any subsequent flash of lightning or sound of thunder is noticed by the referee, an additional 30 minutes is needed before players can step on the field of play (either game paused or the following scheduled game). This would include any teams showing up early for pre-game warm-ups.

If there is a game scheduled to follow at the same field immediately after the paused game that would have its start delayed by 15 minutes or more, or if there is a permit issue time limit with field, the paused game will be stopped at that time due to weather and not resume. Players and coaches from the stopped game are free to go home and the NCSA Rules regarding games stopped by an official due to weather will be followed.

If wait time exceeds past an hour of the expected completion of the game, then the game will not be resumed and the NCSA rules regarding abandonment will be followed per Rule [8.2.4](#).

6.11 POST GAME

Visiting teams shall be responsible for picking up any litter created by them or their spectators. Failure to do so shall be noted on the referee report and will result in disciplinary action by the Games Conduct Committee. Any foul or abusive language within the game and heard by the official(s) will not be tolerated and is subject to action by the Games Conduct Committee. Good sportsmanship is of great importance to the NCSA.

6.12 GAME SCORES

The winning team must record the score online via the NCSA website at www.ncsanj.com within 4 hours of completion of the game. In case of a tie, the home team must record the score. When recording the game score, the team entering the score shall report the correct score. If the score is not recorded within 4 hours, or if the score is incorrect, the offending team(s) shall be subject to a \$25 fine. In an effort to limit excessive scoring, any team that wins a game with a greater than 7-goal differential, the head coach must appear before the Games Conduct Committee and shall be assessed a minimum of \$100 fine and may also be assessed a 1 game suspension. In addition, any team that wins by more than 7 goals will only be awarded 2 points for the win instead of 3.

6.13 INCOMPLETE GAMES

If a game is not played, or completed, for any reason, the home team must email the Division Commissioner AND the Games Chair(s) within 4 hours, briefly explaining the reason for the game not being completed. Failure to do so will result in a \$50 fine.

6.14 NCSA GAME PROTESTS

The Games Conduct Committee shall deal with all protests arising out of games played under NCSA jurisdiction. Protests must be submitted in writing via email from the Club Rep or Club President authorizing the NCSA to charge their club account the protest fee of \$100, no later than 48 hours after the game is concluded to the Games Conduct Chair and copy their Division

Commissioner and the NCSA Administrator on the email. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be credited back to their club account, if denied it will be retained by the NCSA. With regard to referees, protests based on perceived referee bias or questions as to judgment calls made by referees are not reviewable. Only misinterpretations of the Laws of the Game or these rules of competition will be examined. For example, the Games Conduct Committee will not review a protest based upon a referee's alleged mistake of calling a player offside but would review a game if the referee awarded an indirect kick for a handball offense in the penalty box.

6.15 "HOME" GAMES AT VISITOR'S FIELD - "HOST" TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

The schedule will clearly indicate the home and visiting teams regardless of the field location of the game. In the event a team does not have a home field available for a regularly scheduled game, makeup game, or playoff game, it is still entitled to the privileges and responsibilities of the home team (i.e. choice of colors, provision of proper game balls). This does not remove responsibilities of the host team (the team providing the field) for acceptability of field conditions (goals, goal nets, lining of field and corner flags and safety) even if it is designated the visiting team by the schedule.

7. REFEREES

7.1 FIELD CHANGES

Referees are always assigned to fields as shown in the online schedule. Referees may not re-check the schedule after leaving for games on a particular day. In case of changes after deadlines in Section [5.3](#) and following, which changes have not been confirmed to the team by the referee, a home team representative must meet the referee at the initially designated field and direct or take him/her to the alternate field or pay referee full fee for game cancellation. Failure to do so will result in a fine of \$75.

7.2 RULES

The referee is required to officiate the game under the Laws of the Game as prescribed by IFAB and accepted by the USSF, US CLUB SOCCER, and the NCSA. The referee is not authorized to coach or advise players other than within the Laws of the Game and official interpretations thereof and these Rules of Competition. The referee is required to enforce the Rules as stated throughout these Rules of Competition and shall not modify the Laws of the Game or any rules herein.

7.3 FEES

Prior to the game, the referee shall be paid at the field by both teams according to the official fee schedule set annually by the NCSA Board and listed on the NCSA Match Day form. Each team will be responsible for half of the applicable fee. If there is no agreement to pay the referee electronically ([7.3.1](#)) then each team is expected to bring exact change to pay each referee. Fees are clearly stated on the NCSA Match Day form and each team coach should arrive with exact change or checks to be split amongst the assigned referees. (U10 and under = half of center; U11 and up = half of center + equivalent of 1 AR) If team coach does not have exact change, the referee is not under any obligation to provide change at the field. If a referee cancels a game before it begins due to field or weather conditions, the referee and all AR's who are present at the field shall be entitled to receive a travel fee of \$25, to be paid by the home team. If a referee suspends a game for any reason after it begins, the referee together with the ARs shall be entitled to the full fee(s), paid in accordance with 7.3.1 and 9.2.

7.3.1 Electronic Payment

The NCSA is authorizing and recommending that referees can be paid via Venmo or other agreed upon electronic methods as an alternative to distributing cash and/or checks.

8. GAMES CONDUCT COMMITTEE

8.1 MEETINGS

The Games Conduct Chair(s) shall convene, either in person or by phone, a meeting that shall consist of a minimum of two members of the Committee. Whenever possible, action by the Committee will be taken within one week of any infraction. Penalties for Player Infractions are contained in Rule [8.2.5](#). All decisions of the Committee shall be communicated by email to the affected club, and the respective Division Commissioner.

8.2 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

8.2.1 Fields and Equipment

Each of the following violations shall be subject to a minimum fine of \$25 per incident. Repeated infringements may require the Club to appear before the Games Conduct Committee:

- Inadequate Field Marking(s)
- Improper Field Dimensions
- Missing Goal Nets
- Missing Corner Flags
- Dangerous Field Conditions
- No Game Ball and/or Substitute Game Ball
- Goals Not Secure

8.2.2 Forfeited Games

A team that forfeits a game may not be eligible for awards. The team forfeiting shall also be responsible for the entire referee's or referees' fees and shall be fined \$250 for each forfeit. After three forfeits, the team shall be suspended from play, pending action taken by the Games Conduct Committee. The team forfeiting will pay the referees the entire fee for the game (both team's share) electronically at or before game time. Failure to do so will result in the referees filing an unpaid ref claim and a fine of an additional fee of \$75 per referee to the forfeiting team.

8.2.3 Behavior of Coaches

Coaches are primarily responsible for the conduct of their respective players and spectators. Physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated TOWARD ANYONE. The referees shall be instructed to caution coaches for their own, or their spectators' unsportsmanlike conduct. In the event that a coach and or the spectators persist after a caution, the referee shall issue a red card to the coach and abandon the game if the referee feels that the situation is out of control. In the event a suitable carded coach is unavailable to take over for the red carded coach the game shall be abandoned. A referee does not have to issue a caution or warning before issuing a red card or abandoning a game.

Any fine or suspension for conduct directed at or about a minor referee shall be enhanced.

8.2.3.1 Penalties

Any coach who (a) enters the field of play without the referee's permission (b) enters the field of play with permission (such as to tend to an injured player) and uses that opportunity to dissent, argue or discuss a referee's call or (c) approaches an official in the officials' area or as leaving the field without permission, to dissent, argue or discuss a referee's call, shall be issued a red card and will be automatically suspended for three games and fined \$100.

A coach who is issued a yellow card shall be fined \$25. A coach who is issued a red card shall be fined \$100, and the infraction will be reviewed by the Games Conduct Committee. If warranted, the Games Conduct Committee may impose additional disciplinary action including suspension or additional fines. For any second infringement, in addition to the penalties listed above, the coach in question will be required to appear before the Games Conduct Committee, at which time the Committee will determine any additional disciplinary action, which may include suspension and additional fines up to \$200. Third infringements shall result in the coach automatically being suspended for the remainder of the seasonal year, or longer, and fined up to an additional \$300. In addition, the coach shall be placed on probation for the subsequent two seasonal years. Any additional infringements while on probation shall be grounds for the coach being permanently banned from the NCSA.

"Referee Abuse" and "Referee Assault" are defined terms under USFF Policy 531. Use of these terms in NCSA Rules has the same meaning. Referee Abuse penalties are addressed in Rule 8.2.3 and 8.2.5. Referee Assault will result in a minimum of a two-year ban and may result in a permanent ban from NCSA and will include a fine of up to \$500.

Any fine or suspension for conduct directed at or about a minor referee shall be enhanced.

The Games Conduct Committee will review all incidents involving referee abuse, or assault and any coach, or club official, who threatens a referee, or a league official, through email or otherwise, or at any time before, during, or after a game, including following such into a parking area. The penalty for such offense shall be a minimum fine of \$500.00 and suspended for a minimum of a year and an appearance before the NCSA Board for reinstatement.

8.2.4 Abandoned Games

If a game is abandoned for reasons other than weather or permit issues, and the team causing the abandonment is tied or leading, the game shall be considered a forfeit. If the team causing the abandonment is trailing, the game result shall stand based on the score at the time of abandonment. Any coach, who deliberately removes his/her team from the playing field, thus causing the game to be abandoned, shall be subject to a fine of \$100. A second abandonment by a coach shall, in addition to a \$100 fine, result in his/her immediate suspension for the remainder of the seasonal year. If a game is abandoned for weather, injury, lack of light or field permit reasons (but field permit reasons only if weather or injury caused a delay which made the field permit time limit an issue), the game shall be replayed if the abandonment occurs before the completion of the first half. If the game is abandoned as indicated in last sentence after the completion of the first half, then the score at the time of abandonment shall stand.

8.2.5 Player, Coach, Team Staff Send Off/Red Card Infractions

Infraction	Penalty
Violent Conduct	Up to 3 games

Serious Foul Play	Up to 3 games
Abuse of Officials	Up to 3 games
Persistent misconduct	Up to 2 games
Denying goal scoring opportunity	Up to 2 games
Abusive, Offensive or Insulting language	Up to 2 games
Any other red card offense	Up to 2 games
Misconduct after Send Off	Up to 2 additional games
Participate in NCSA game as suspended Player or Coach	5 additional games

Any Red Card offense will result in a minimum of a 1 game suspension.

Any fine or suspension for conduct directed at or about a minor referee shall be enhanced.

Games Conduct will review the situation and determine length of suspension. In some cases, Games Conduct Committee will review events, referee report, and additional information, where/when available, to investigate potential acts of misconduct and make a determination of that conduct and/or the penalty that is issued.

Suspension of player or coach is for all on-field NCSA sanctioned activities, including the ability to referee NCSA games, until the suspension has been satisfied for the team which they were coaching/playing or at which the misconduct occurred at time of suspension. (FOR EXAMPLE: IF A COACH IS RED CARDED DURING HIS/HER U12 GIRLS 10AM GAME AND HE/SHE HAS 3 OTHER GAMES TO COACH ON SAME DAY, HE/SHE IS NOT ALLOWED TO COACH, OR REFEREE, UNTIL HE/SHE SERVES THE SUSPENSION FOR THE U12 GIRLS TEAM HE/SHE WAS COACHING AT 10AM WHEN RED CARD WAS ISSUED)

A second infringement of any of the above may result in a hearing before the Games Conduct Committee for determining further disciplinary action. Disciplinary action that results in a suspension of more than five games must be ratified by the Board. A player suspension shall begin at the following scheduled league game. Suspensions will carry over to the following seasonal year if not completed in the current seasonal year.

8.2.6 Multiple Yellow Cards

Any player who has received three yellow cards during any season (the Fall or Spring) shall be suspended for a minimum of 1 game. Each additional two yellow cards received by player shall carry another suspension of a minimum of 1 game. Clubs are responsible to monitor the online report of cautions and to comply with the suspensions despite lack of notice from the league. Failure to suspend the player shall result in the forfeit of any games after appearing in the online reports or notification of the suspension.

If suspensions are not served by the player because of the end of the season, the suspensions shall carry over to the next season. A coach of a team that has accumulated 10 or more cautions during the seasonal year may be required to appear before the Games Conduct Committee and suspensions and/or fines could be assessed to the coach of the offending team at the discretion of the Games Conduct Committee.

Any coach who receives two yellow cards in one season, for the same or multiple teams, shall be suspended for one game. The one game suspension is to be served for the next scheduled game for that coach, regardless of which team may be involved in play. Any coach, who has received two yellow cards during the seasonal year, shall be fined an additional \$100. Three yellow cards to a coach will be reviewed by the Games Conduct Committee for appropriate additional sanctions including suspension and fines.

If a suspension other than an automatic suspension noted above is issued, the Games Conduct Chair shall notify the Club representative that the player or coach is suspended. Failure to suspend the player or coach shall result in the forfeit of any games played after notification of the suspension among other penalties listed in 3.5.

8.2.7 Game Monitoring

If at the discretion of the Games Conduct Committee, a particular game and/or team needs to be monitored as a result of prior conduct or incident(s), then the team which has triggered the monitoring oversight shall reimburse the League for the fee paid to the monitor. The monitoring fee shall be equal to the fee which would be paid to the referee assigned the game. An NCSA Board Member may also request a game to be monitored at league cost without chargeback to a club.

8.2.8 Other

All other player, club, or team infractions shall be considered by the Games Conduct Committee and disciplinary action shall be determined based on the circumstances of the infraction. The Games Conduct Committee may also require an appearance before the NCSA Board for any player, club, team or coach infractions.

8.2.9 Board Action

In addition to actions taken by the Games Conduct Committee, the NCSA Board may independently assess fines of up to \$1,000 and/or suspend teams, clubs, and/or personnel, provided the penalty is assessed at one NCSA Board meeting and confirmed at a later NCSA Board meeting.

8.3 SUSPENSION APPEALS

Appeals of Games Conduct Committee decisions must be made in writing by a Club President, Club Representative or alternate Representative to the Games Conduct Chair, within 10 days of receipt of the written decision by the Games Conduct Committee along with authorization for the Club to be charged \$100 for hearing the appeal. The \$100 charge shall be removed or credited to the assessed fine depending on the result of the appeal. The Games Conduct Chair shall notify the appropriate Club Representative of the hearing before the NCSA Board. The Games Conduct Chair shall present the appeal to the NCSA Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting or may request a 'Special Meeting' of the NCSA Board as outlined in the By-laws.

Appeals can only be made by the club that is penalized. In addition, a club can only appeal decisions that exceed the minimum penalties as set forth in these Rules of Competition.

9. FEE AND FINE SCHEDULE

9.1 REGISTRATION FEES:

9.1.a US Club Soccer Guidelines

Team Registration fees for 2023-2024 up to September 30th (April 30th for spring-only teams)

- U8 \$200/team plus \$25/player for each player above 8
- U9 to U10 \$380 per team
- U11 and U12 \$460 per team
- U13 to U15(Fall) \$480 per team
- U15 to U19 (Spring Only) \$430 per team

Only 2 coach/admin passes per team are included in the team registration fees. Additional passes are charged at \$40. NCSA will bill club for each additional pass.

Note: A team is considered to be a “new team” that must register for the Spring season if the team is registered in a new age group (unless moving up an age group with same team solely for higher level competition based on Fall results), change in gender, or more than 50% of the players are new players added to team roster. If the Club feels a team should not be considered as a new Spring registration, they must submit formal letter to NCSA Board detailing their position at the time of registration. Any team that withdraws from competition for Fall season per section [3.4](#), would be considered a new team for spring season and must pay registration fee per above for play in the Spring season.

Effective October 1st – (May 1st for spring-only teams): NCSA will bill club for each additional pass per fee schedule below:

- Players up to and including U11: \$14 per player/per pass
- Players U12 and older : \$18 per player/per pass
- Staff: \$40 per 2 year staff member/per pass
- All other fees charged by US Club or its agents as a precondition to US Club issuance of passes are the responsibility of the Club.

9.2 REFEREE FEES

Referee fees are to be paid before the game starts, and will be shared equally by both teams, pursuant to the following schedule.

Division	Age Group	Game Length	Center Referee Fee	Assistant Referee Fee
1	U17 – U19	45 minute halves	\$100	\$60
2	U15-U16	40 minute halves	\$90	\$55
3	U13-U14	40 minute halves	\$90	\$55

4	U11-U12	35 minute halves	\$80	\$50
5	U9-U10	30 minute halves	\$70	\$40 ¹

¹-AR's are typically not assigned for U10 and younger; however, if scheduling of U11 or older small sided is mixed with U10 and younger small sided, then AR's may be assigned for referee assignment continuity.

For U11-U19--if No AR's are at the game increase the Center Referee Fee by \$20. If there is only 1 AR at the game, increase the Center Referee Fee by \$10.

If any payment to an official is made by any form other than cash and the payment is not honored for any reason, the Club must arrange make payment to the official within 5 days of notice to the club of the amount of the referee fee and all costs for the payment not being honored. Failure of the club to do so will result in the referee fee and costs being paid to the referee by the NCSA, which will charge all such amounts plus \$75 for each instance of dishonored payment to the club. Referees must submit their claim for unpaid fees within 24 hours from the start of the game.

9.2.1 Bonds

Each Club shall have submitted a bond of \$600. Bonds of clubs leaving the NCSA are forfeited to the NCSA if a request for return is not made within 1 year from last game played in the NCSA.

9.3 FEES AND FINES

Offense	Fine
Late or incomplete team registration / Late payment (Rule 3.3)	Various
Team withdrawal (Rule 3.4)	Loss of registration fee, plus additional penalties
Participation in NCSA game by suspended player or coach (Rule 3.5.b , 8.2.5 , 8.2.6)	\$100-\$250
Inaccurate player or coach information (Rule 3.8)	\$300-\$1,000
Failure to attend President's meeting / Annual General Meeting(AGM)	\$200
Poaching (Rule 4.3.4)	Up to \$500
Failure to play game as originally scheduled (Rule 5.3)	\$100
Failure to pay Referee following Field Condemnation or Late Game Cancellation (Rule 5.3.6 Rule 5.3.11)	Referee fee plus \$75 per referee
Postponing a game without NCSA approval (Rule 5.4)	\$100
Noncompliance with game rescheduling rules – less than 5 days (Rule 5.3.7a) after Monday 11 am – \$35; after Tuesday 11 am - \$60; after Wednesday 11am - \$85; after Thursday 11am - \$125 For weekday games: 4 th day prior to game - \$35; 3 rd day prior to game - \$60; 2 nd day prior to game - \$85; day prior to game or gameday - \$125\$	\$35 to \$125 based on number of days

Scheduling a game or referee without Games Chair(s) approval (Rule 5.4)	\$100
Failure to reschedule TBS/Postponed game (Rule 5.3.6)	\$250
Additional TBS Games (Rule 5.3.7)	\$25 each
Wasting Games Chairs NCSA Board Time	\$150
Smoking or Consuming Alcoholic Beverages (Rule 5.12)	\$50
Failure to update online Match Day Form (MDF) within 24 hours (Rule 6.4)	\$25
Failure to call in score within 24 hours (Rule 6.12)	\$25
Reporting an incorrect score (Rule 6.12)	\$25
Excessive Scoring (Rule 5.1.2 , 6.12)	\$25 - \$100
Failure to notify Division Commissioner and Games Chair(s) of an incomplete game (Rule 6.13)	\$50
Filing protest / Appeal (Rule 6.14 , 8.3 and 9.4.1)	\$100
Coach not meeting referee at the field to pay for a cancellation or notify of a field change (Rule 5.3 and 7.1)	\$75 per referee
Game cancellation due to field conditions (Rule 7.3)	\$25 per referee
Field and equipment infringement (Rule 8.2.1)	\$25, minimum
Forfeited game (Rule 8.2.2)	\$250
Coach's Yellow or Red Card (Rule 8.2.3.1 8.2.6)	\$25 to \$500
Abandoned games (Rule 8.2.4)	\$100
Dishonored Payment to League or Officials (Rule 3.3.5)	\$75 per payment
Game Monitoring (Rule 8.2.7)	Referee fee for game
Independent Board Actions in addition to Games Conduct (Rule 8.2.9)	Up to \$1,000
Registration Fees, Referee Fees and Fines (Rule 9.1)	Various

9.4 PAYMENT OF FEES AND FINES

The Bond Fee must be paid before the start of the seasonal year. All fines and fees must be paid in order for a club's teams to be accepted for registration.

9.4.1 Appeals Process for fines or penalties (not suspensions)

- All appeals must be in writing from a Club President or the NCSA Club Representative and must be received by the NCSA Administrator within thirty days of the fine being posted on www.ncsanj.com and must be accompanied by authorization to charge the Club \$100 for hearing the appeal. The charge will either be removed or applied to fine, depending on the outcome of the appeal
- Appeals must clearly state the reasons for the appeal and provide all relevant evidence in support of the appeal including specifically the reasons why it is felt there is no violation of the NCSA Rules of Competition.
- Within seven days of the receipt of an appeal the NCSA President will convene an Appeals Committee review the appeal. This committee may in its sole

discretion rule on the appeal based upon the information received; or it may seek to interview the Club President or Club Representative; or it may request the Club President and/or Club Representative appear before the entire NCSA Board for a hearing.

- Within thirty days of the receipt of the appeal a ruling will be issued and communicated to the appealing Club.
- All decisions on appeals by the Appeal Committee are final and no further appeals will be granted.

Important: Payment/Appeal of any fines must be submitted within 30 days from the date, fine being posted online at www.ncsanj.com. Any appeal received after the 30 days from fine date will NOT be heard and is considered invalid.

9.5 FAILURE TO PAY FEES AND FINES

Any club or team that fails to pay any of the fees and/or fines, as required by the due date, may be declared by the Board to not be in Good Standing and may be suspended from competition and NOT issued approved Rosters for the current seasonal year. The NCSA reserves the right to deduct all fines from a Club's posted Bond. If this occurs, voting rights and the ability to enter teams into competition are suspended until the Bond is returned to its original value. Clubs that are not in Good Standing will not be able to have teams be declared flight winners or receive any awards.

10. MODIFICATIONS TO THE RULES

These rules will be edited periodically. If these Rules of Competition are not revised by the start of the season the rules from the preceding season will be in effect (until the new version is distributed) with changes announced at the General Meetings or by email to the clubs if during the season.

The NCSA Board has the authority to amend or make exceptions to the Rules of Competition at any time for the good of the game.

The NCSA Board may vote on rule changes at Regular Board Meetings, Emergency Board Meetings, E-mail vote, Telephone conference call vote, and/or Electronic Zoom type meetings, as long as the following requirements are met:

- Quorum (attendance kept)
- Documentation of proposal
- Minutes of the meeting or other method described above
- Results of the vote are kept
- Deadline for voting (if by email)

End of Rules of Competition!