

NASHOBA VALLEY YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE

Policies & Procedures

Spring 2025



AYER-SHIRLEY

BERLIN

BOLTON

BOYLSTON

CHAIR CITY

CLINTON

FITCHBURG

GROTON-DUNSTABLE

HARVARD

HUDSON

LEOMINSTER

LITTLETON

LUNENBURG

MAYNARD

NASHOBA UNITED

NORTH QUABBIN

OAKMONT

PEPPERELL

TOWNSEND-ASHBY

TYNGSBORO

NASHOBA VALLEY YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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SECTION 1. PARTICIPANT SAFETY

The objective of NVYSL, as described in our Constitution, is to promote a vital soccer program designed to educate and develop Players, Coaches and Referees. As part of this mission, NVYSL affirms its commitment to policies, procedures, programs and events designed to promote, nurture, and safeguard the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of all participants in our NVYSL community: Players, Coaches, Referees, Spectators, Administrators and all personnel involved with our member organizations.

NVYSL member organizations should follow Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) health and safety guidelines and policies in order to protect the health and well-being of all participants. All Club Risk Managers, Directors, and Coaches should be familiar with the safety policies posted on the Mass Youth Soccer website: <https://www.mayouthsoccer.org/>. If there is a conflict between Mass Youth Soccer and NVYSL safety policies, Mass Youth Soccer policies shall take precedence.

SECTION 2. LEAGUE OPERATIONS

Chapter 1 LEAGUE STRUCTURE

2.1.01 Expectations of Clubs

- 1) Promote good sportsmanship.
- 2) Do not tolerate unsportsmanlike behavior by coaches, players or spectators.
- 3) Promote good soccer through the development of ball and match skills.
- 4) Maintain rosters.
- 5) Provide a list of potential candidates for voting and nonvoting members of the NVYSL Board.
- 6) For the FALL playing season, ensure that all players on all teams play at least half of each match. For all Rec teams, ensure that all players play at least half of each match in both the Fall AND Spring seasons. Exceptions shall only be for injuries, sickness or discipline.
- 7) A player shall only play for one team in NVYSL.

2.1.02 League Structure

NVYSL offers two categories of play, Competitive and Recreational. All play in Grade 3/4 is Recreational play. For Grade 5/6 and above, Divisions 1 and 2 are Competitive play, and Divisions 3-5 are Recreational play.

2.1.02(a) Age Grouping

Players shall be grouped as described by MYSA Dual Grade Groupings.

2.1.02(b) Division Structure

Division structure is as follows:

Grade 3/4

- Division 1
- Division 2
- Division 3
- Division 4 (if necessary)
- Division 5 (if necessary)

Grade 5/6 and 7/8

- Division 1 - In Spring season, MTOC Eligible
- Division 2 - In Spring season, Nashoba Cup Eligible
- Division 3
- Division 4 (if necessary)
- Division 5 (if necessary)

Grade 9/-10 and Grade 9/PG

- Division 1 - In Spring season, MTOC and Nashoba Cup Eligible

Divisions 3-5 may be segmented into sub-divisions (e.g. 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2). For Fall seasons, the subdivisions are not expected to be tiered until after mid-season adjustments. For Spring seasons, the subdivisions should be tiered when possible.

Teams competing in Division 1 are not permitted to transition in or out of the division during the season. In the interests of competitive balance, at mid-season, Division 2 teams are permitted to move down to Division 3 and Division 3 teams are permitted

to move up to Division 2. For teams moving up in Division, only outcomes at the higher division will be considered when determining standings and qualification for postseason play. For those teams that moved up into a postseason eligible division, but registered as a recreational team, NVYSL will invoice for the difference in team fees.

2.1.02(c) Blended Divisions

NVYSL shall only leverage Blended Divisions when there are fewer than 4 teams registered in a Division and all other options have been exhausted. If 4 or more teams are registered in a Division, then Blended Divisions shall not be used.

In the event of a Blended Division, standings are based on match outcomes and the registered division shall not be taken into account for determining postseason placement/qualification.

2.1.02(d) Postseason Eligibility

Only teams competing in Division 1 and 2 are postseason eligible. Teams vying for MTOC play must request placement in Division 1. Teams vying for Nashoba Cup play must request placement in Division 2. Grade 9/10 and Grade 9/PG teams will register and be placed in Division 1 and be eligible for MTOC and Nashoba Cup play. Teams registered in lower divisions may be invited to play in the Nashoba Cup if not enough teams are available to play.

Chapter 2 ELIGIBILITY

2.2.01 Team Eligibility

2.2.01(a) Residency

At least 75 percent of the players on a team must reside in towns served by NVYSL for the team to be eligible for NVYSL play. For the purpose of team residency, a school choice player is considered to be a resident of the town where the choice school is located.

2.2.01(b) Responsibility of Club and Coach for Team Eligibility

The Club and coach of a NVYSL team are responsible for verifying that the team is in compliance with these team eligibility rules.

2.2.02 Coach Eligibility

A head coach MUST be at least 18 years of age by the date of the first match played by his or her team at the start of the season.

A head coach or assistant coach cannot also be a player on his or her team.

A person younger than 18 years of age may be rostered as an assistant coach of a team on which he or she is not a rostered player.

A Credentialed adult, at least 18 years of age and on such teams' roster, must be present on the team sideline at each match played by a team. In the event that the team has no rostered adult coach available for a match, a Credentialed adult from the team's Club may serve as the coach for the match.

A Team that does not meet these requirements for its coach cannot play in the NVYSL.

2.2.03 Player Eligibility

2.2.03(a) Residency

A player is eligible for a NVYSL team of a member Club if they meet any ONE of the following criteria:

- a) The player resides in the towns served by the NVYSL Club.
- b) The player is a full time student at a school located in the towns served by the NVYSL Club.
- c) If a player resides in a town which has no soccer club, or which does not offer play in the player's gender/Age Group during the season under consideration, or which does not have an open roster slot in the player's gender/Age Group, said player may freely choose any team in the state.
- d) If a player has played for NVYSL teams of a NVYSL Club for at least the last two consecutive playing seasons of that NVYSL Club, they are eligible to continue playing for that Club.
- e) Grade 9 and older players who reside in a town served by a multi-town regional high school may play for a team in any town served by the school. Specific exclusions from multi-town schools include charter schools, vocational high schools, and private high schools.
- f) A player who plays on a Grade 9/10 or Grade 9/PG team for a school different than their own through an MIAA-sanctioned cooperative arrangement may play on the team of the town where the school is located.

Supporting documentation, as stipulated by the NVYSL Board, must be submitted with the team roster. If a player resides in a town outside NVYSL, then a release must be obtained from both:

- 1) The President of the soccer Club that serves that town.

2) The President of the soccer League that serves that town.

2.2.03(b) NVYSL Multi-Town Clubs

NVYSL Clubs serve only the town in which they are located unless they are defined by NVYSL to be Multi-Town Clubs. The NVYSL Multi-Town Clubs are:

North Quabbin United	serves	Athol, Orange , Royston, Petersham , New Salem
Ayer-Shirley	serves	Ayer, Shirley
Chair City	serves	Baldwinville, Gardner, Phillipston, Templeton
Groton-Dunstable	serves	Groton, Dunstable
Harvard	serves	Harvard, Still River
Nashoba United	serves	Lancaster, Stow
Oakmont	serves	Ashburnham, Westminster
Townsend-Ashby	serves	Townsend, Ashby

The intent of the Player Eligibility by-law is to protect the interests and choices afforded to a player, not to give a Club a claim to a player.

2.2.03(c) Single Team Rostering in NVYSL

A player may not be rostered on more than one NVYSL team at any given time. A player may not be rostered on a NVYSL team and a team from another MYSA affiliated MTOC League at any given time.

2.2.03(d) Responsibility of Club and Coach for Player Eligibility

The Club and coach of a NVYSL team are responsible for being aware and making the players aware of all NVYSL eligibility rules. The Club and coach are also responsible for verifying that all players on the team are in compliance with these rules.

2.2.04 Teams Playing Ineligible Players

If a team is determined to have played an Ineligible Player, that is an unregistered player, registered player not eligible to play, or Player Pass violation on that team for any match, the minimum "penalty/sanction" to be assessed by NVYSL shall be the following:

- 1) The match or matches involving the Ineligible Player shall be Forfeit and the NVYSL Forfeit fine shall be assessed for each match.
- 2) In addition to the Forfeit fine, the Club shall also be assessed a \$50.00 fine.
- 3) The player shall be suspended from the next match, following notification by the NVYSL Board, if it is determined that the player knowingly played as an Ineligible Player.
- 4) The coach shall be suspended from the next match, following notification by the NVYSL Board, if it is determined that the coach knew of an Ineligible Player status beforehand.
- 5) In the SPRING season three (3) points shall be deducted from the team's point count used to determine NVYSL standings.

The NVYSL Board may assess a more severe penalty or impose sanctions against the player, coach, team, and Club as the NVYSL Board deems appropriate after investigating the facts of the situation.

Chapter 3 TEAM REGISTRATION & PLACEMENT

2.3.01 Team Registration Process

The NVYSL team registration process consists of the following series of events according to the NVYSL calendar for the current season.

2.3.01(a) Preliminary Team Registration Date

Each member Club submits its preliminary list of teams to NVYSL, on a date outlined in the Seasonal Calendar. This provides both NVYSL and the member Clubs a clear picture of which competition levels are viable. The NVYSL Competition Committee will review

all requests and inform Clubs of their decisions after the Final Team Registration Date.

2.3.01(b) Final Team Registration Date

Each member Club submits its final list of teams and field assignments to NVYSL, on a date outlined in the Seasonal Calendar.

2.3.01(c) Late Team Registration

A team may only be added after the Final Team Registration Date with NVYSL approval. If a Grade 5/6-or-older team is added after the Final Team Registration Date, then an additional \$250 late registration fee per added team shall be assessed. The late registration fee for a Grade 3/4 team is \$125. These fees cover penalties and rescheduling costs.

2.3.01(d) Late Team Withdrawal

If a Club withdraws a Grade 5/6-or-older team after the Final Team Registration Date, then a \$500 late withdrawal fee shall be assessed for each withdrawn team. The late withdrawal fee for a Grade 3/4 team is \$250. These fees cover penalties and rescheduling costs. The registration payment shall be returned to the Club.

2.3.01(e) Roster Submission Date

Each Club shall be required to submit their team rosters to NVYSL for certification on a date outlined in the Seasonal Calendar. If a Valid Team Roster, as defined below, is not received by the NVYSL Roster Processor by such date, then a \$25 late roster submission fee shall be assessed for each team that is late.

2.3.01(f) Club Affiliation Material Date

Each Club must be affiliated by Mass Youth Soccer before any of its teams are permitted to participate in NVYSL matches. If a Club is not affiliated on or before the Club Affiliation Material date, as outlined in the Seasonal Calendar, then that Club shall Forfeit, as defined below, all matches until affiliation is complete.

2.3.01(g) Final Fee Payment Date

Each Club must have all its NVYSL registration fees and past NVYSL fines paid in full before by such date set by NVYSL. If a Club has not paid its registration fees and past fines in full on or before the Final Fee Payment Date, as communicated by NVYSL and outlined in the Seasonal Calendar, then that Club shall be assessed a \$100 late payment fee and shall not be permitted to play the following season until such payments are made in full.

2.3.02 Competition Committee

2.3.02(a) Purpose

The purpose of the Competition Committee is to provide the most even competition among teams.

2.3.02(b) Membership

The Competition Committee will be composed of the President, Team Scheduler, NVYSL Roster Processor, Grade Directors, and others knowledgeable of the sport and NVYSL, who will be appointed by the President. Grade Directors will make recommendations regarding team placement decisions. The President will serve as chairperson. Member Clubs will be informed of placements different than originally requested on a timely basis, and have the opportunity to appeal placements.

2.3.03 Team Placement

Clubs may submit teams in any Division that is offered. A minimum of four teams will be required to have regular competition in each division unless the NVYSL Board makes a specific exception. In the event there is an insufficient number of teams registered in a division, the Competition Committee or respective Grade Director may blend or combine teams from multiple divisions together to form a division large enough to have regular competition. For example, if there are an insufficient number of teams in Division 1, the teams from Division 1 and Division 2 may be combined to form a Blended Division 1/Division 2.

Recreational divisions may be divided into two or more Flights, nominally enumerated Divisions 2 to 5, and, if necessary, sub-Flights to provide competitive balance within the Flight or sub-Flight.

Grade 3/4 teams will be placed in flights by the Grade 3/4 Directors based on previous records and any other information deemed appropriate by the Competition Committee to provide the most even competition.

Grade 5/6 and above Division 1 (or blended Division 1/Division 2) teams shall be placed by the Competition Committee based on the team records the previous spring and previous fall and any other information deemed appropriate by the Competition Committee. In the Spring season, teams shall be randomly placed in flights within Division 1 (or blended Division 1/Division 2).

Grade 5/6 and above Recreational teams will be placed in flights as determined by the Grade Director and the Competition Committee. In Recreational divisions, consideration will be given to a Club request to place multiple Club teams in separate flights.

2.3.04 Team Commitment

Teams receiving an invitation to MTOC are expected to accept the invitation. In the event that a team does not accept the invitation, and a viable alternative cannot be identified, then the corresponding Club will be subject to any monetary penalties imposed on NVYSL.

Chapter 4 TEAM ROSTERS

2.3.01 Valid Team Rosters

2.4.01(a) Roster Requirements

Valid Team Roster shall mean a roster generated by the NVYSL system and shall include:

- 1) The minimum number of players (as defined below)
- 2) The player's name in alphabetical order by last name
- 3) At least one (1) and no more than three (3) credentialed coaches, 18 years or older
- 4) The Club Registrar's signature
- 5) The NVYSL Roster Processor's signature
- 6) The date of the validation

Player eligibility must follow MYSA Eligibility policies.

Coaches are responsible for making sure that the correct player jersey number appears on the rosters for each match. Player jersey numbers may be either generated or handwritten on rosters.

Only players on the roster at the time of validation are permitted to play, unless they fall under Player Pass Policy as defined in

2.4.04(c) [Player Pass](#) Procedure.

2.4.01(b) Roster Size

For 11v11 play the maximum size for a team is 22.

For 9v9 play the maximum size for a team is 18.

For 7v7 play the maximum size for a team is 12.

2.4.01(c) Permissible Roster Changes

For Division 1 (or blended Division 1/Division 2) teams in the spring season, there are no exceptions to the maximum roster size.

Roster deletions (dropping a player from the roster) may be made during the playing season, prior to the roster freeze date outlined in the Seasonal Calendar. If a roster has fewer than the maximum number of players on it, players may be added at any time prior to the roster freeze date.

For Recreational teams, players may be added to, dropped from, or transferred between Recreational teams at any time during the season.

2.4.01(d) Validation of Roster Changes

All rosters and roster changes must be validated by the NVYSL Roster Processor and used as the Valid Team Roster for all matches from the validation date on.

2.4.02 Team Rosters for Matches

The coach must provide ONE (1) printed Valid Team Roster to the referee prior to each NVYSL match. Only players named on a Valid Team Roster may play unless as defined in the Player Pass Policy. See [Valid Team Rosters](#).

If a coach is unable to present a printed NVYSL Valid Team Roster, then before the match may begin, a printed or written (non-virtual) roster including the coaches' names, player names, and jersey numbers for the team must be prepared. This roster will be sent to the NVYSL Roster Processor for player eligibility verification.

2.4.03 Player Pass Policy

The NVYSL Player Pass Policy enables flexibility in personnel movements on a per-match basis, while respecting the sanctity and integrity of the NVYSL Valid Team Roster. A Host Team may, for one match at a time, host a Guest Player from another Team in their Club, subject to the following conditions:

2.4.04(a) Requirements for Host Teams

Host Teams

- Carry no more than THREE (3) Guest Players for any particular match.
- Must not exceed the maximum roster size allowed for the Age Group.

2.4.04(b) Requirements for Guest Players

Guest Players

- Will play no more than TWO (2) NVYSL matches in one day.
- Are currently rostered on another NVYSL Team within the same Club under ONE of the following conditions:
 - At a division level equivalent to or below the level of the Host Team. Divisions 1 and 2 are NOT considered equivalent, and Divisions 3, 4, and 5 are considered equivalent.
 - At an Age Group below the level of the Host Team.
- May participate in a Player Pass no more than THREE (3) times during a season.
- Are not permitted in MTOC qualifier postseason play.
- Are permitted for the Nashoba Cup Tournament, but no player can play for multiple teams in the Nashoba Cup Tournament. Player passes for the Nashoba Cup Tournament must be submitted to the NVYSL Roster Processor 3 days in advance of the tournament.

2.4.04(c) Player Pass Procedure

Any Host Team intending to invoke a Player Pass must obtain approval from their Club, who will notify the NVYSL Roster Processor that a Player Pass is being used.

During Referee player check-in, the Host Team's Coach must present the Referee with the following documents:

- ONE (1) copy of the Host Team's NVYSL Valid Team Roster;
- ONE (1) copy of each NVYSL Valid Team Roster from which Guest Players are being drawn, with Guest Players clearly marked.

Following the match, the Referee will document use of a Player Pass in their Game Report.

2.4.04(d) Misconduct

- Any Team determined to have violated or abused the Player Pass Policy will have their Player Pass privileges revoked for the remainder of that season.
- Any Club with multiple Teams found in violation of the Player Pass Policy will have their Player Pass privileges revoked for all Teams in that Club for the remainder of that season.

Chapter 5 RESCHEDULING

2.5.01 Match Time Changes

Matches must be played as scheduled except as provided below.

2.5.01(a) Mutual Agreement of Opposing Coaches

Match time may be changed by mutual agreement of coaches, but only after the change has been approved by the Grade Director. Match time changes must have mutual agreement of the coaches, appropriate Referee Assignor, and approval of the Grade Director. Match time changes must be at least 10 days prior to the scheduled date of the match or within 2 days of schedule release. Within 10 days of the match or after 2 days of schedule release, the match must be played as scheduled.

Match time may not be changed by mutual agreement of the coaches for Grade 9/10 and Grade 9/PG scheduled matches in the spring season. The match must be played as scheduled unless the field is unplayable. If a match is not played and the field is playable, then a Forfeit shall be assessed to the team or teams that cannot field a team for that match. Grade Directors may allow exceptions in unusual circumstances, such as when the match was published as a "singleton" Saturday evening match.

2.5.01(b) Unplayable Field Conditions

Match time may be changed up to 2 hours before the scheduled time of the match when there are unplayable field conditions. The Host Club shall notify the responsible Referee Assignor, the NVYSL Grade Director, and the visiting coach of any such changes.

2.5.01(c) Easter Weekend/Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur

Rescheduled matches requested by either team will be allowed up to 7 days in advance of the scheduled time of the match. The team requesting the change shall act as the Home Team and follow the Rescheduling policy.

2.5.01(d) Columbus Day/Memorial Day Weekend

Rescheduled matches requested by either team will be allowed up to 7 days in advance of the scheduled time of the match. The team requesting the change shall act as the Home Team and follow 2.5.02 [Rescheduling Matches](#).

2.5.01(e) Spring School Vacation Weekends

If matches are scheduled for two spring school vacation weekends, each team may request a reschedule for only one weekend of the spring vacation. Rescheduling requests will be allowed up to 7 days in advance of the scheduled time of the match. The team requesting the change shall act as the Home Team and shall follow section 2.5.02 [Rescheduling Matches](#).

2.5.01(f) Grade 3/4, 5/6, and 7/8 Conflicts with Academic or Religious Events

A team will be permitted to reschedule a match due to a conflict with either an academic or religious event provided that the Club/team involved completes the necessary schedule and match time changes by the start of season play. The team requesting the change shall notify the responsible Referee Assignor, the NVYSL Grade Director and the opposing team coach prior to the start of the season, or the match must be played as scheduled. Examples include required and planned school functions outside of normal school hours, academic-related events (e.g. College Board testing, National Merit Scholarship testing), and religious classes or events (e.g. C.C.D.). In the event of a late decision by school, religious, or other authorities to add or change the time of an event, the Grade Director will decide how to resolve the schedule conflict.

2.5.01(g) Grade 9/10 and 9/PG Match Time Change Requests

For the Grade 9/10 and Grade 9/PG teams that play on Sunday in the Spring Season, two schedule change requests per team will be permitted by the NVYSL Board. One acceptable change request can be for High School Graduation. This must be submitted with the final registration. A second acceptable request can be for an official school date such as Band trips, Chorus trips, Senior Class trips, and trips to another country. The request must be submitted to the NVYSL Scheduler prior to the start of the season. The request must include the reason and the number of players affected.

2.5.02 Rescheduling Matches

All missed matches shall be rescheduled within 7 days of their scheduled date. A rescheduled match shall be played within 14 days of the originally scheduled date unless otherwise approved by the Grade Director. For the spring season only, all Division 1 and Division 2 make-up matches must be played no later than the Wednesday prior to the playoff matches.

If a match must be rescheduled:

1. The coaches must agree on a makeup date and time or discuss it with the Grade Director.
2. The Home Team must secure a playable field.
3. The Home Team must get approval from their Club Referee Assignor.
4. The Home Team must get approval from the NVYSL Grade Director.

In the event of the coaches not agreeing on a make-up day, each Grade Group will have a designated day of the week to make up its matches. These days are as follows;

- a) Grade 3/4 - Monday
- b) Grade 5/6 - Tuesday
- c) Grade 7/8 - Wednesday
- d) Grade 9/10, Grade 9/PG – Saturday

Unscheduled matches may appear throughout the regular schedule in flights with an odd number of teams. An Unscheduled match shall be played within 14 days of its scheduled date. An Unscheduled match can be played prior to its scheduled date if agreeable to both coaches. If coaches cannot agree on a make-up day, the above make-up rescheduling rules apply.

The Grade Directors and NVYSL Board will address exceptions to these rules and make appropriate adjustments if necessary. For the spring season, Grade 9/10 and Grade 9/PG matches may be scheduled for Saturday to eliminate Unscheduled matches.

2.5.03 Replay of Suspended Matches

If a match is suspended before it has been completed due to sudden inclement or dangerous weather, that match shall be rescheduled as a make-up match and replayed in its entirety unless BOTH coaches agree to accept the result of the partially played match as final. If a match is abandoned due to fracas or other inappropriate conduct by players, coaches, or spectators, the Sportsmanship Committee will decide whether or not the match is to be replayed.

Chapter 6 STANDINGS & TIEBREAKERS

2.6.01 League Standings and Match Score Reporting

2.6.01(a) Spring Season

In the Spring season, a team shall receive three (3) points in the standings for a win, one (1) point for a tie, and zero (0) points for a loss. Points will be deducted for Yellow Card/Red Card/Ejections as described in 5.2.01(c) Card Points. Each Grade Director will have the responsibility of maintaining a record of both match scores and Division standings. The Club has the responsibility of reporting scores as defined in 2.6.01(g) Match Score Reporting.

2.6.01(b) Tiebreakers for a Spot in Post-Season Tournament Play

If two teams are tied for a spot in a Post-Season Tournament, then the winner will be determined by a one match playoff at a date and time arranged by the Grade Director.

If there are more than two teams tied for a spot in the Tournament, there will be a series of matches played to determine the representative. For example, if three teams were tied, two of the teams would play each other and the winner of that match would play the third team. The winner of that second match would be the representative.

The ORDER of play will be decided by Seeding For Post-Season Tournament Play. For example, in the case of the three-way tie, if one of the three teams had beaten the other two during the season (head-to-head), that team would play the winner of a match between the other two teams. If there was no clear cut head-to-head winner, then the team with the greatest goal differential would play the winner of a match between the other two teams. If a tie for highest goal differential occurred then the team with the least goals allowed would play the winner of a match between the other two teams. If a tie for least goals allowed occurred, then a coin toss would be used to decide the order.

2.6.01(c) Seeding for Post-Season Tournament Play

Teams will be seeded in a Post-Season Tournament in accordance with their season records and the tie breaker procedure for seeding, if necessary. For all post-season matches, the higher seeded team will be the Home Team.

The tie breaking procedure for seeding is:

- 1) Winner of head-to-head competition
- 2) Total goal differential (goals scored minus goals allowed) with a maximum differential of 4 goals per match
- 3) Least goals allowed
- 4) Coin Toss

Note that in the above tie breaking procedure, all matches that count in the standings will be used. In case of a Forfeit, the match score shall be 4-0.

2.6.01(d) MTOC Group

NVYSL representatives to the MTOC Tournament will be based on results of play in the end-of-season NVYSL MTOC Qualifying Tournament. Team eligibility, seeding, policies and procedures for the NVYSL MTOC Qualifying Tournament are available on the NVYSL website.

2.6.01(e) Breaking Ties in Playoff or Tournament Matches

If a playoff or tournament match is tied at the end of regulation play, then, for Grade 7/8 and below, two 10 minute overtime periods shall be played, for Grade 9/10 and above, two 15 minute overtime periods shall be played. The teams shall switch ends at the end of regulation play. The teams shall again switch ends after the first overtime period and kick off immediately. There is no break between overtime periods. Both overtime periods will be played to their full duration. If the score remains tied after the completion of both overtime periods, then FIFA/IFAB law 14 The Penalty Kick shall be used to determine the winner.

2.6.01(f) Fall Season

Records of match scores will be kept during the fall season. These will be used for fall midseason team placement correction, if necessary, and as inputs to spring team placement, where appropriate. Each Grade Director will have the responsibility of maintaining a record of match scores.

2.6.01(g) Match Score Reporting

The Club shall post to the NVYSL web site the scores for all matches within 24 hours of their completion. The Club shall report all matches NOT played within 24 hours of their scheduled playing time. For every 7 days that any score is not received on time, the Club shall be fined \$25.00.

If a score is not received within 7 days of the scheduled match date, one of the following actions will be taken:

- a) If one team has reported the score, that score shall be recorded as the final result.
- b) If neither team has reported a score, the match will not be recorded and neither team will receive points in the standings. In addition, each team will be assessed the Forfeit fee at the Grade Director's discretion.

2.6.01(h) Excessive and Unreasonable Goal Differentials

NVYSL values competitive balance between Teams in a flight as a vehicle of its commitment to fostering player development and good sportsmanship. NVYSL further recognizes potent negative consequences that excessive scoring can exert on all parties involved in a match. Therefore, NVYSL relies on Coaches to mitigate competitive imbalances during matches by actively and aggressively pursuing measures to prevent excessive scoring.

An EXCESSIVE Goal Differential (EGD) is defined as the winning team scoring greater than or equal to seven (≥ 7) goals more than the losing team. That is, the maximum goal differential limit without being considered Excessive is 6.

Instances of EGD will trigger email notifications to the Grade Director, as well as the Coaches and Club Officials of both Teams involved in the match. NVYSL Grade Directors will investigate instances of EGD, including but not limited to, requiring written reports from all involved Coaches describing the context of the excessive scoring. If the NVYSL Grade Director determines an EGD match constitutes a sportsmanship violation, the matter will be escalated to the NVYSL Sportsmanship Director for review and possible action against the Coach, Team, or Club.

If the instance of EGD is a sportsmanship violation and is the second or more EGD match by the team within the season, regardless if the previous instance was determined to be a sportsmanship violation, the Head Coach (or designee, if the Head Coach was absent) of the offending Team will serve a suspension from their next match unless the NVYSL Sportsmanship Director determines there were extenuating circumstances that warrant other action.

2.6.02 Match Protests

The outcome of a match may be protested after it has been played only if either:

- a) There was an incorrect application of the FIFA/IFAB Laws of the Game or Rules of NVYSL for a specific incident which directly affected the outcome of the match.
- b) A team plays an Ineligible Player.

A judgment call by the referee cannot be protested. Claims of referee bias or non-neutrality cannot be protested.

Protests relating to the grounds, goals or other appurtenances of the match will not be considered unless an objection has been lodged with the match referee BEFORE the commencement of the match. The referee shall require the Home Team to remove the cause of the objection, if this be possible, without unduly delaying the process of the match.

Protests relating to a specific match may only be lodged by a coach of a team playing in the match. Protests must be in writing and must be sent to the Protest Officer (NVYSL Vice President), with the protest fee of \$100, within 48 hours following the playing of the match. The fee will be refunded only if the protest is upheld. Any protest of a championship match must be initiated by notifying the referee on the field at the end of the match. The referee must note this in the match report and within 1 hour notify the NVYSL Referee Director, who will then notify within 1 hour the Protest Officer. Protests will be accepted for hearing only for matches played in the Spring season for Division 1 and Division 2, playoffs, and tournaments.

2.6.03 Protest Committee

2.6.03(a) Purpose

The purpose of the Protest Committee is to rule on all protests and to determine the disposition of abandoned matches.

2.6.03(b) Membership

The Protest Committee will be chaired by the Protest Officer and must have at least two other members chosen by the chairperson.

2.6.03(c) Procedure

The Protest Officer, when notified of a protest, shall cause the committee to fact find and, if necessary, hold a hearing. Deliberations and a final decision will be made in closed session. A decision shall be rendered within 14 days of receipt of all required written material. All Protest Committee actions shall be reported in writing and sent to the parties involved, the NVYSL President, the NVYSL Secretary, the NVYSL Referee Director and the Grade Director. The Protest Committee shall report any activity at the next NVYSL Board meeting.

2.6.03(d) Conflict of Interest

No one shall be a member of the Protest Committee if that member:

- a) Was involved in the match as a coach or referee
- b) Is a family member of an involved coach or referee
- c) Has a child playing on one of the teams involved
- d) Is from a Club so involved

If the Protest Officer needs to recuse, the NVYSL President shall assume the Protest Officer position.

2.6.03(e) Appeal

A decision of the Protest Committee may be appealed to Mass Youth Soccer in accordance with the Mass Youth Soccer [appeals process](#).

SECTION 3. RULES OF COMPETITION

Chapter 1 UNIVERSAL

3.1.01 Rules of Play

Current FIFA/IFAB Laws of the Game shall govern play with exceptions as noted. Coaches and other interested parties may obtain an electronic copy of the Laws from the IFAB web site.

3.1.02 Ball Sizes

- a) Grade 9/PG: Size 5
- b) Grade 9/10: Size 5
- c) Grade 7/8: Size 5
- d) Grade 5/6: Size 4
- e) Grade 3/4: Size 4

3.1.03 Uniforms and Equipment

Players on a team shall wear uniquely numbered shirts of the same color. Numbers shall be a minimum of 6" high and clearly visible. In the event of two teams of the same color playing, it is the responsibility of the **AWAY** team to bring shirts/pinnies of a different color.

Athletic shorts or pants are required.

Each player shall wear fully covered shin guards or they will not be allowed to play.

Keepers are allowed to wear keeper gloves with finger savers.

Splints with soft, non-rigid, external flexible structure or covered non-rigid internal structural items (similar to finger savers on keeper gloves) are allowed. They may not have any loose straps.

Players with plaster or fiberglass casts or hard splints, even if padded, cannot play—even with the permission of a parent or medical approval. Players with orthopedic braces that have exposed or uncapped metal parts are also not allowed to play.

IFAB law 4 mandates; "All items of jewelry (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, studs, leather bands, rubber bands, etc.) are forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewelry is not permitted." Wrist bands must be removed if possible and may be required to be taped at the referee's discretion.

Players with medical, religious, or cultural wearable items must have the item properly secured and protected (such as by taping down, covering, wrapping, or secured through other methods.) Medical information displayed on an item must stay observable.

3.1.04 Playing Periods

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| a) High School Rec | : | Two 35 minute halves |
| b) Grade 9/10, Grade 9/PG | : | Two 40 minute halves |
| c) Grade 7/8 | : | Two 35 minute halves |
| d) Grade 3/4 and Grade 5/6 | : | Two 30 minute halves The half-time |

interval shall be 5 minutes.

3.1.05 Match Times

Matches may be scheduled at different times than below to deal with lack of available fields or to make up a postponed match.

3.1.05(a) Saturday

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| a) Girls Grade 3/4 | : | 9:00 AM |
| b) Boys Grade 3/4 | : | 10:30 AM |
| c) Girls Grade 5/6 | : | 12:00 PM |
| d) Boys Grade 5/6 | : | 1:30 PM |
| e) Girls Grade 7/8 | : | 3:00 PM |
| f) Boys Grade 7/8 | : | 4:30 PM |
| g) High School (Grade 9/10, Grade 9/PG) | : | 6:00 PM or earlier w/mutual agreement |

3.1.05(b) Sunday

High School (Grade 9/10, Grade 9/PG) : 1:00 PM or 2:45 PM or 4:30 PM

3.1.06 Stoppage for Player Rehydration

The referee must stop play to allow the players to rehydrate under the following conditions:

- Following MYSA policies on stoppage for rehydration.
- In conditions of high heat and humidity when the heat index is 80 F or above.
- If either team has 1 or fewer substitutes and a hydration break is requested by the coach prior to the start of the match.
- If a referee deems a rehydration break is necessary.

Rehydration breaks are initiated by the referee near the middle of the half and occur during the match running time. A rehydration break will occur for no longer than 2 minutes per half during a stoppage in play.

3.1.07 Team and Spectator Location

The Home Team shall be allowed to select the touchline where the teams are to be located. Both team's credentialed coaches and players shall be located on the same touchline.

Spectators of both teams shall be located outside the touchline on the opposite side of the field from the teams. Spectators are not permitted behind goal areas or lines. Referees may enforce the separation of spectators to be designated across from their related teams.

All coaches, spectators, and players not involved in active play shall remain at least 4 feet behind the touchline. When possible, the home Club is encouraged to paint additional dashed lines a minimum 4 feet outside the touchlines on both sides of the field.

Coaches and players not involved in active play must remain a minimum of 8 yards away from the halfway line except for players waiting to be substituted. If there is a marked team technical area, coaches and players must remain within its confines. Coaches may attend to an injured player on the field with permission by the referee to enter the field.

This policy shall apply unless physically impossible as determined by the referee.

3.1.08 Substitutions

Substitutions shall be unlimited except where specified otherwise in the Rules and Regulations for a special competition. A substitution may take place at any stoppage of play, with permission from the Referee. The substitution rules apply to all NVYSL Age Groups and levels of play.

Chapter 2 11v11 FORMAT

3.2.01 Number of Players

In eleven versus eleven (11v11) competition, a team shall have at least seven (7) and no more than eleven (11) players, including the goalkeeper, in order for the match to begin or continue. A team must have at least 7 players or Forfeit the match. A team is permitted to willingly and intentionally play shorthanded with fewer than eleven (11) but no fewer than seven (7) players. The maximum roster size is listed in 2.4.01(b) Roster Size.

3.2.02 Limited Heading in Grade 7/8

Consistent with the rule adopted by MYSA in March 2016, NVYSL requires that heading training in the Grade 7/8 Divisions be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week, with no more than 15-20 headers per Player per week. Grade 7/8 Players are permitted to head the ball without limit during matches.

Chapter 3 9v9 FORMAT

3.3.01 Modified Rules for 9v9 Play in Grade 5/6 Division

3.3.01(a) THE FIELD OF PLAY

The Field of Play for 9v9 matches in the Grade 5/6 Division as of the Effective Date shall have dimensions of 70 to 80 yards long (Touch Line) by 45 to 55 yards wide (Goal Line) as outlined by US Youth Soccer's Rules for Small-Sided Games.

The Field of Play shall have the following markings:

- 1) Halfway Line with a Center Mark at its midpoint
- 2) Center Circle with a radius of 8 yards from the Center Mark
- 3) Penalty Area marked by two lines drawn at right angles to the Goal Line, 14 yards from the inside of each goalpost,

extending into the field of play for 14 yards and joined by a Penalty Line drawn parallel with the Goal Line.

4) Penalty Mark drawn 10 yards from the midpoint between the goalposts.

5) An arc of a circle with a radius of 8 yards from the Penalty Mark drawn outside the Penalty Line.

6) Goal Area marked by two lines drawn at right angles to the Goal Line, 6 yards from the inside of each goalpost, extending into the field of play for 6 yards and joined by a line drawn parallel with the Goal Line.

3.3.01(b) GOALS

The Goals for 9v9 matches in the Grade 5/6 Division shall have dimensions of approximately 6 feet tall by approximately 6 yards wide, where available. Goals must be firmly secured to the ground.

3.3.01(c) NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Each team must field no fewer than seven (7) and no more than nine (9) Players in order for a 9v9 match to begin or continue. One Player on each Team must be a designated Goalkeeper.

A team is permitted to willingly and intentionally play shorthanded with fewer than nine (9) but no fewer than seven (7) players, one of whom must be a designated Goalkeeper.

The maximum roster size is listed in 2.4.01(b) Roster Size.

3.3.01(d) 8-YARD RULE

Opposing Players shall be at least 8 yards from the ball on the kickoff, corner kicks, direct kicks, and indirect free kicks.

3.3.01(e) GOALKEEPER DISTRIBUTION

After a Goalkeeper takes possession and distributes the ball (e.g., by throw, punt, dropkick, etc.), the ball must next touch a Player or the Field prior to going beyond the top of the Penalty Area of the opposing Team, or there is a loss of the ball and play restarts with an indirect free kick at the Halfway Line.

3.3.01(f) GOAL KICK

The Goal Kick shall be taken from anywhere in the Goal Area. Opposing Players must stand outside the Penalty Area until the ball is in play, or the Goal Kick shall be retaken. After the Goal Kick is put in play, the ball must next touch a Player or the Field prior to going beyond the top of the Penalty Area of the opposing Team, or there is a loss of the ball and play restarts with an indirect free kick at the Halfway Line.

3.3.01(g) NO HEADING IN MATCHES IN THE Grade 5/6 DIVISION

Consistent with the rule adopted by MYSA in March 2016, NVYSL prohibits heading by Players during matches in the Grade 5/6 Division. Coaches are permitted to train Players in the Grade 5/6 Division proper technique for heading the ball only during practice, and must ensure that training is limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per Player per week. Referees shall penalize any Player who deliberately heads or attempts to head the ball by awarding an indirect free kick for the opposing team from the spot of the infraction. If the heading infraction is committed by a defending Player inside the Goal Area or the Penalty Area, the indirect free kick shall be taken from the point on the Penalty Line nearest the spot of the infraction. An apparent goal scored as a result of deliberate heading shall be disallowed.

Chapter 4 7v7 FORMAT

3.4.01 Modified Rules for 7v7 Play in Grade 3/4 Division

3.4.01(a) THE FIELD OF PLAY

The Field of Play for 7v7 matches in the Grade 3/4 Division as of the Effective Date shall have dimensions of 55 to 65 yards long (Touch Line) by 35 to 45 yards wide (Goal Line) as outlined by US Youth Soccer's Rules for Small-Sided Games.

The Field of Play shall have the following markings:

1) Halfway Line with a Center Mark at its midpoint

2) Center Circle with a radius of 8 yards from the Center Mark

3) Penalty Area marked by a Penalty Line extending from one Touch Line to the other, 12 yards from and parallel to the Goal Line. No Goal Area is required.

4) Penalty Mark drawn 9 yards from the midpoint between the goalposts.

3.4.01(b) GOALS

The Goals for 7v7 matches in the Grade 3/4 Division shall have dimensions of approximately 6 feet tall by approximately 4 yards wide, where available. Goals must be firmly secured to the ground.

3.4.01(c) NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Each team must field no fewer than five (5) and no more than seven (7) players in order for a 7v7 match in the Grade 3/4 Division to begin or continue. One player on each team must be a designated Goalkeeper.

A team is permitted to willingly and intentionally play shorthanded with fewer than seven (7) but no fewer than five (5) players, one of whom must be a designated Goalkeeper.

The maximum roster size is listed in 2.4.01(b) Roster Size.

3.4.01(d) 8-YARD RULE

Opposing Players shall be at least 8 yards from the ball on the kickoff, corner kicks, direct kicks, and indirect free kicks.

3.4.01(e) GOALKEEPER DISTRIBUTION

After a Goalkeeper takes possession and distributes the ball (e.g., by throw, punt, dropkick, etc.), the ball must next touch a Player or the Field prior to entering the Penalty Area of the opposing Team, or there is a loss of the ball and play restarts with an indirect free kick at the Halfway Line.

3.4.01(f) GOAL KICK

The Goal Kick shall be taken from anywhere in the Penalty Area, up to and including the Penalty Line. Opposing Players must stand no closer than the Halfway Line until the Goal Kick is taken, or the Goal Kick is re-taken. After the Goal Kick is put in play, the ball must next touch a Player or the Field prior to entering the Penalty Area of the opposing Team, or there is a loss of the ball and play restarts with an indirect free kick at the Halfway Line.

3.4.01(g) INDIRECT KICKS

Indirect kicks by the offensive Team due to a foul by the defense within the Penalty Area shall be taken from the point on the Penalty Line nearest the spot of the infraction.

3.4.01(h) DROP BALLS

A drop ball due to an event within the Penalty Area shall be taken from the point on the Penalty Line nearest the spot of the infraction.

3.4.01(i) OFFSIDE LAW

The Offside Law shall be enforced only for 7v7 matches in the Division 1 Flight of the Grade 3/4 Division. The Offside Law shall not apply in any other matches in the Grade 3/4 Division.

3.4.01(j) NO HEADING

Consistent with the rule adopted by MYSA in March 2016, NVYSL prohibits heading by Players in the Grade 3/4 Division. Coaches must not instruct, encourage, or permit Players in the Grade 3/4 Division to head the ball during any practice, match, or other soccer activity. Referees shall penalize any Player who deliberately heads or attempts to head the ball by awarding an indirect free kick for the opposing team from the spot of the infraction. If the heading infraction is committed by a defending Player inside the Penalty Area, the indirect free kick shall be taken from the point on the Penalty Line nearest the spot of the infraction. An apparent goal scored as a result of deliberate heading shall be disallowed.

3.4.01 (k) THROW IN LAW

The Throw-In Law (Law 15) shall be enforced only for 7v7 matches in the Division 1 Flight for the Grade 3/4 Division. The Throw-In Law shall be adapted for all other matches in the Grade 3/4 Divisions to allow 1 rethrow by the same player per throw-in. For example, a team commits a throw-in violation and the same player is given a rethrow. If there is a violation on the rethrow, the throw-in turns over to the opposing team.

SECTION 4. REFEREES

Chapter 1 PROTOCOL

4.1.01 Referees

Referees attain certification by successfully completing a course run by the Massachusetts State Referee Committee and maintain certification for the current calendar year through annual recertification courses.

Either a one-person system or a three-person system shall be used for NVYSL matches. If there are only two referees available, their roles are center referee and assistant referee.

In accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game the referee may stop, suspend, or terminate (abandon) a match. The referee may restart a match after it has been stopped or suspended. The referee may not restart a match after it has been terminated (abandoned). The referee must report the circumstances of an abandoned match to the Competition Committee Chairman (NVYSL

President).

Referee quality is an important factor to the success of our program. The proper channel to submit constructive comments to the Nashoba Valley Soccer Referee Director is to use the Referee Evaluation Form found on the NVYSL web site at www.nvysl.org. The Referee Evaluation Form cannot serve as the basis for a match protest.

4.1.02 Referee Assignors

Each NVYSL member Club must have a certified Referee Assignor whose duties are to assign referees as required. The NVYSL Referee Assignor must also be certified. Referee assignors attain certification by successfully completing a course run by the Massachusetts State Referee Committee, and maintain certification through annual recertification courses.

If any Club is not able to provide a certified Referee Assignor, then the NVYSL Referee Assignor or the NVYSL Referee Director shall take over the assigning duties for that Club on a temporary basis until the Club is able to provide one. The Club will pay the temporary assignor \$4/match for 3 referee matches and \$2/match for 1 referee matches (Grade 3/4 matches).

4.1.03 Referee Pool

Each Club, through its Club Referee Assignor, is expected to contribute referees to the NVYSL referee pool, and to encourage the recruitment and development of referees. Referees are independent contractors. As such, Clubs do not have exclusive use of their referees. There are two exceptions:

1. The referee does not show as available to be assigned in your town.
2. When the season or mid-season schedule is released for Grade 3/4, 5/6, and 7/8 matches, the Club Referee Assignors are asked not to assign other Club's referees without a discussion with that Club's assignor for a period of at least 48 hours after the release of the schedule. This time may be adjusted by the NVYSL Referee Director based on when schedules are released, and whether there are other mitigating circumstances.

4.1.04 Referee Assignment – Town of Residence

Referees are paid professionals expected to maintain their neutrality toward the teams on the field, regardless of the town of residence of the referee.

Chapter 2 PROCESS

4.2.01 Referee Assignment – Responsibility

4.2.01(a) Fall Season

In the FALL season, the Home Club Referee Assignor assigns referees to all scheduled matches, unscheduled matches, and makeup matches.

4.2.01(b) Spring Season

In the SPRING season the following applies:

NVYSL Assignor:

- a) All regular season matches for Grade 9/10 and Grade 9/PG teams
- b) Post- season playoff matches
- c) All tournaments and jamborees
- d) Assist Home Club Assignors upon request

Home Club Assignor:

- a) All regular season matches for grade 7/8 and younger groups
- b) All rescheduled matches, including Grade 9/10, Grade 9/PG and unscheduled matches

4.2.02 Referee No-Shows

If the scheduled referee does not show up at the field for the match, the opposing coaches have the following options.

- a) Agree on a single substitute certified referee for the entire match and the match counts in the standings.
- b) Do not play the match and set a make-up date.
- c) Agree on a single substitute non-certified match facilitator, and the match is played as a scrimmage which will not count in the standings.

NVYSL will only pay certified referees.

Coaches must report ALL referee no-shows to the responsible NVYSL Grade Director as soon as is practical.

4.2.03 Referee Pre-Match Responsibilities

The center referee is responsible for making sure that the field is in a safe condition prior to the start of a match including:

- Verify that goals are properly anchored against tipping over.
- Corner flags meet FIFA standards.
- Ensure that the entire playing surface is safe.
- Verify that goals in close proximity to the field are anchored or laid to prevent tipping over.

The referee should apprise the home coach of any issues with the field, which are to be addressed by the home coach.

The center referee is responsible for checking in each team prior to the start of the match, and may delegate check-in to available assistant referees. Check in consists of:

- Ensure that coaches have proper credentials. Official MYSA Credentials must be displayed and worn by all team officials on the team sideline. Electronic versions are not valid. Any coach without credentials cannot be present on the team sideline.
- Review NVYSL Valid Team Rosters provided by Coaches:
 - Check off the name of each coach and player present, including Guest Players (see 2.4.04(b) [Requirements for Guest Players](#)).
 - Note each coach and player not in attendance.
 - Ensure that the correct uniform numbers are recorded for each player.
 - In MTOC flights, verify that the photos on the roster match the players.
- Verify player uniforms meet Uniforms and Equipment policy.

Any issues must be noted in the referee Game Report.

4.2.04 Referee Post-Match Responsibilities

Following all matches, Referees shall do the following.

Complete Game Reports within 48 hours of the match. Game Reports must include:

- Final score
- All use of the NVYSL Player Pass by Home or Visitor Teams
- Any special circumstances (e.g., cards issued, field conditions, player conduct violations, injuries, spectator conduct, referee absences, etc.)

Report issued cards to the Referee Assignor and Sportsmanship Committee at reports@nvysl.org.

Retain the NVYSL Referee Field Card and paper rosters until 14 days past the end of the season.

4.2.05 Referee Payment

If a certified referee shows up at the field for a match for which they have been assigned, then that referee shall be paid whether or not the match is played.

NVYSL will only pay certified referees.

NVYSL will not pay referees who do friendly matches between two NVYSL teams. The referees for friendly matches must be arranged by the participating Clubs and paid by one or both of the participating Clubs. In particular, if a NVYSL match is Forfeit by one of the teams, then that NVYSL match has been “played” and a “makeup” match is deemed a friendly match.

Referee pay sheets are prepared by the NVYSL Referee Paymaster for Grade 5/6 – Post-Graduate matches based on Game Reports submitted by the referee, and referees are paid in a timely manner. Referee payment for Grade 3/4 matches is provided by the Home Team Club in accordance with the pay scale established by the NVYSL Board.

Chapter 3 SUPPORT

4.3.01 Referee Support

The coaches shall support referees at all times:

- 1) Coaches are responsible for fan behavior. Any coach who does not comply with a referee's request to deal with a fan shall be issued a misconduct as deemed appropriate by the referee.
- 2) Any fan who verbally or physically assaults a referee prior to, during, or following a match will be subject to a review by the Sportsmanship Committee and may be prohibited from viewing matches for a period deemed appropriate. The enforcement of this prohibition will be the responsibility of the Club of the fan.
- 3) Any team/Club that refuses to provide the name and address of a fan who verbally or physically assaulted the referee will be subject to review of the Sportsmanship Committee and may be denied play in NVYSL as a result of that review.
- 4) If a coach has a disagreement with a referee, they are expected to adhere to the NVYSL zero- tolerance bylaw before, during and after the match. The coach is expected to express their opinions about the referee, stating facts via a REFEREE

EVALUATION found on the [NVYSL website](http://www.nvysl.org) (www.nvysl.org). The NVYSL Referee Director will evaluate referee evaluations and act accordingly. The coach is expected NOT to express his critical opinion outside of these channels, especially by means of emails and verbal communication.

4.3.02 Referee Mentors

The NVYSL fully supports the initiatives of the Massachusetts State Referee Committee (MSRC) to advance referees through formal referee assessments and informal referee mentoring sessions done by senior referees. At the request of any referee, the NVYSL Referee Director will collaborate with the MSRC to schedule an assessment of the referee during a match appropriate to the referee's ability. Referee Mentors are observers at a field of play and they have no special standing to intervene in the proceedings of a match. If a Referee Mentor chooses to intervene due to a perceived safety issue, they are expected to do so with considerable discretion and tact.

4.3.03 Field Marshal

The Field Marshal Program is intended to allow a Club (for regular season matches) or NVYSL (for post-season playoff matches) designated individual to speak up on behalf of the referee. Anyone acting as the Field Marshal must be MYSA affiliated through a Club or NVYSL.

Field Marshal Responsibilities

To uphold NVYSL's Zero Tolerance Policy and serve as a role model to our young athletes.

- 5) Position yourself near the halfway line on the spectator's side, which is to be on the opposite side of the players bench (no spectators on the team player side of the field or behind goal line).
- 6) Be attentive to the comments, actions, and behavior of spectators and team officials.
- 7) Act on behalf of the referee by reminding parents and team officials to keep their comments to themselves and refrain from vocalizing their complaints during the game.
- 8) Quickly diffuse potential problems before they arise by either being visible or calmly speaking with the persons involved.
- 9) Deal with, and act on, inappropriate comments, gestures and/or general unsporting behavior by spectators or team officials directed at referees, players or anyone else. Avoid getting into a confrontation. If someone remains hostile after being asked to calm down, gather as much information but do not put yourself in a dangerous position. The Field Marshal will not interfere with the coach, but can gather information as necessary to forward to the NVYSL Sportsmanship Committee for follow up.
- 10) Support the referee when requested by the referee to do so, should a situation require this. The referee retains control of the venue and may overrule the Field Marshal.

If a situation warrants, the Field Marshal shall gather information to forward to the NVYSL Sportsmanship Committee for follow up. Field Marshals are not expected to put themselves in a situation which may compromise their own safety. Contact NVYSL at src@nvysl.org to provide details of the situation.

If a referee feels that the Field Marshal is interfering with the match, the referee may at any time dismiss the Field Marshal from their Field Marshal role. This may be done directly, or by asking the Home Coach to dismiss the Field Marshal. If this happens, the Field Marshal is now a spectator.

SECTION 5. MISCONDUCT

Chapter 1 PROCESS

5.1.01 Sportsmanship Review Committee

5.1.01(a) Purpose

The purpose of the Sportsmanship Review Committee (SRC) is to promote good sportsmanship within NVYSL and to review issues of:

- a) Lack of sportsmanship
- b) Inappropriate conduct
- c) Unbecoming conduct
- d) Serious violation of the Constitution, Bylaws or NVYSL rules.

5.1.01(b) Membership

The SRC will be chaired by one of the Sportsmanship Committee Members and shall consist of at least three impartial members chosen by the Chairperson. Whenever possible, one or more members shall be from outside the NVYSL Board. The Chairperson shall vote only in cases where there is a tie.

5.1.01(c) Procedure

The Sportsmanship Director, when notified of a sportsmanship issue, and after fact finding, shall have the authority to immediately

suspend the individual, team, or Club pending a hearing by the SRC. The Chairperson shall schedule an SRC hearing after receiving written notification of the sportsmanship issue. Timely notice shall be communicated (at the same time) to all individuals and/or Clubs involved. All parties involved will be invited to attend the hearing to present evidence and witnesses. Unless otherwise specified by the chairman, all documented evidence along with a list of attendees and witnesses shall be submitted to the Chairperson at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled hearing. A final decision by the SRC shall be completed within 14 days of the hearing. All SRC actions shall be reported in writing and sent to the parties involved, the President, the Secretary, the Referee Director, and the Grade Director. The SRC shall report any activity at the next NVYSL Board meeting.

5.1.01(d) Conflict of Interest

A member of the SRC shall be disqualified from deliberating or ruling on a particular issue if that member: was involved in the issue; is the spouse of an involved person; has a child playing on an involved team; or is from a Club or association so involved. The Chairperson shall appoint acting members to serve in place of those disqualified.

5.1.01(e) Penalties

The SRC shall have the authority to suspend an individual, a team or a Club, to reduce a team's points, or to take any other actions provided for in the Bylaws or Constitution.

5.1.01(f) Appeal

A decision by the SRC may be appealed to the Appeal Committee. The Appeal Committee will be chaired by the Vice President, or a person selected by the Executive Board. The committee shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members including the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall vote only in cases where there is a tie.

The request for an appeal must include:

1. a. A written appeal from the individual, team or Club (Appellant) detailing the reasons why the appeal is being requested, as well as any new information or witnesses to be presented.
2. Verification that the appeal is being requested by the Board of the Appellant's Club.
3. A \$200 appeal fee (to be refunded if the appeal is successful in part or whole) to be received by the Treasurer before the appeal hearing date is set.

The Chairperson shall schedule an Appeal Hearing after receiving the above items. Timely notice shall be communicated to the Appellant.

A final decision by the Appeal Committee shall be completed within 14 days of the hearing. The decision shall be reported in writing and sent to the Appellant, the President, the Secretary, the Referee Director, and the Grade Director. The Appeal Committee shall report any activity at the next NVYSL Board meeting.

The Appellant may appeal the decision with MYSA in accordance with their [appeals process](#).

5.1.02 Unbecoming Conduct

Player, coach, referee, team or Club behavior that is judged unbecoming or inappropriate shall be referred to the SRC for review and action.

5.1.03 Fracas

If two teams are involved in a fracas before, during, or after a match, the teams involved in the fracas will be subject to a mandatory Sportsmanship Review Committee meeting. The findings may include (but are not limited to) suspensions of individual participants, financial penalties as described elsewhere in the NVYSL by-laws, and possible suspension of eligibility for any post-season tournaments in which they represent the NVYSL. For purposes of this by-law, a fracas is defined as a physical altercation involving more than two participants. A participant of a match is any one of the following classes of persons present at the field of play of an NVYSL match: player, coach, assistant coach, or spectator. If either a player or a coach is involved in a fracas, they will not be allowed to play/coach in the next match played by their team.

Chapter 2 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

5.2.01 Yellow Cards / Red Cards / Ejections

The head coach is solely responsible for adhering to and enforcing any sanctions issued against any of the coaching staff, spectators or players of their team. NVYSL is under no obligation to notify any coach or player of a sanction aside from the initial cards issued at a game, or after given the result of a sportsmanship hearing that includes sanctions. Noncompliance may result in additional sanctions as determined by a sportsmanship hearing. If a suspended coach or player does participate in a game they are suspended from participating in, the team is subject to forfeiting that game.

5.2.01(a) Players

If a player receives a Yellow Card or a Red Card, the actions detailed in the tables below will take place:

In a Match	Action Required / Notes	Card Points ^d
1st Yellow Card	Player must leave field. ^a Player may return at the next substitution opportunity.	1
2nd Yellow Card	Player is shown a red card. Player must leave the field of play. ^b Team plays with one less player for the balance of the match. ^c Player is prohibited from playing in the next match for this team while representing the NVYSL.	1
Red Card (not as a result of two yellow cards)	Player must leave the field of play. ^b Team plays with one less player for the balance of the match. ^c Player is prohibited from playing in the next match for this team while representing the NVYSL.	2

In a Season	Action Required / Notes	Card Points ^d
1st Yellow Card	Follow rules as above.	1
2nd Yellow Card	Follow rules as above.	1
3rd Yellow Card (No red card in same match)	Player may continue to play in that match. Player is prohibited from playing in the next match for this team while representing the NVYSL.	2 (2 for Red Card equivalent)
3rd Yellow Card (Red card in same match as a result of two yellow cards)	Player must leave the field of play. ^b Team plays with one less player for the balance of the match. ^c Player is prohibited from playing in the next match for this team while representing the NVYSL.	2 (1 for each Yellow Card)
3rd Yellow Card (Red card in same match as result of separate sending off)	Player must leave the field of play. ^b Team plays with one less player for the balance of the match. ^c Player is prohibited from playing in the next match for this team while representing the NVYSL.	3 (1 for Yellow Card + 2 for Red Card)
4th Yellow Card (regardless of red card status)	Player may continue to play in that match. Player is prohibited from playing in the next match for this team while representing the NVYSL.	1
5th Yellow Card (and each subsequent, regardless of red card status)	Player may continue to play in that match. Player is prohibited from playing in the next match for this team while representing the NVYSL. Sportsmanship Review Committee hearing must be held before player can participate in NVYSL matches.	1
1st Red Card	Follow Rules as above	2
2nd Red Card	Player is prohibited from playing in the next two (2) matches for this team while representing the NVYSL.	2

In a Season	Action Required / Notes	Card Points ^d
3rd Red Card	Player is prohibited from playing for the remainder of the season for this team while representing the NVYSL. ^e	2 ^f

Players prohibited from playing in a game may be on the team sideline during the games they are suspended from, but they may not be suited up to play (no cleats, no shinguards, and the only part of the team uniform they may wear is the team jersey), and they do not get checked in. They can not participate in the team warmup, nor in the pre-game handshake line. They can also choose to not be on the team sideline, and be a spectator on the spectator side of the field. Suspended players are still subject to any and all sanctions that all players are subject to.

NOTES:

- a) Unless the number of players drops below the minimum number required to play.
- b) Player must remain at least 200 yards from the field for the remainder of the match and for 60 minutes following the match. Adult supervision of the player is required.
- c) One less player PER RED CARD. If the number of players drops below the required minimum to play, the team with not enough players will Forfeit the match.
- d) No individual player may receive more than 3 card points in a match. See examples below.
- e) The season includes playoffs and tournament matches.
- f) If fewer than four (4) matches remain for the current season, this prohibition extends through the first four (4) matches of the next season in which the player is eligible and rostered to compete within the NVYSL.

5.2.01(b) Coaches

If a Coach (including Assistant Coach) is dismissed from a match, they must leave the entire field of play immediately. Ejected or suspended Coaches must remain a minimum of 200 yards from the field from 60 minutes before the match until 60 minutes following the match. The ejected Coach may not contact, communicate with, or send information to any players or coaching staff, by any means during the course of the match. In addition, the Coach will be suspended from coaching the next TWO matches played by that team.

If a Coach accumulates TWO cautions in matches from which they were not dismissed, the Coach will be suspended from coaching the next match played by that team.

To eliminate any uncertainty about a referee's action toward a Coach, the referee must show a YELLOW card to a Coach along with a verbal statement of caution, or a RED card along with a verbal statement of dismissal, as appropriate.

Any Coach that is suspended from coaching may not be on the team sideline or participate in any team activities for any game they are suspended from coaching. That includes warmups, pre game, breaks, halftime and post game, until all game activities have been completed. At these games they have the role of a spectator, and may only be on the spectator side of the field during the activities of the game. A suspended Coach may not coach at all during a game they are suspended from. Any Coach suspension only applies to the team they were suspended from coaching, unless additional sanctions were issued by NVYSL. Suspended coaches are still subject to any and all sanctions that all coaches are subject to.

5.2.01(c) Penalties

Penalties for offenses shall be assessed as follows:

Category	Description	Penalty ^a
Excessive Scoring	Scoring difference = 7 to 9 goals - First offense	Warning from Grade Director
Excessive Scoring	Scoring difference = 7 to 9 goals - Second or subsequent offense	1 Match Suspension of Acting Head Coach. ^b
Excessive Scoring	Scoring difference = 10+ goals - First offense	1 Match Suspension of Acting Head Coach. ^b
Excessive Scoring	Scoring difference = 10+ goals - Second or subsequent offense	2 Match Suspension of Acting Head Coach. ^b
Spectator Conduct	Spectator verbally questioning referee - First minor offense	Verbal warning to Head Coach. ^c

Category	Description	Penalty ^a
Spectator Conduct	Spectator verbally questioning referee - Second offense	Yellow Card to Head Coach. ^c
Spectator Conduct	Spectator verbally questioning referee - Third offense	Red Card to Head Coach. ^c
Spectator Conduct	Spectator approaching Referee after the match	Team Forfeits next match.
Spectator Conduct	Spectator approaching Opposing team personnel	Team Forfeits next match.

NOTES:

- a) Sportsmanship Hearings can be requested at any time. The penalty may be overturned, upheld, or increased at a Sportsmanship Hearing.
- b) At Grade 5/6 and younger, the penalty may be waived by an NVYSL Sportsmanship Director. At Grade 7/8 and older, the penalty may be imposed by an NVYSL Sportsmanship Director.
- c) Referee shall follow IFAB law 12.

5.2.01(d) Card Points

Card points shall be assessed as follows:

- 1) 1 card point for each yellow card issued to a player
- 2) 2 card points for each red card issued to a player
- 3) 2 card points for each caution / yellow card issued to a coach
- 4) 3 card points for each dismissal / red card issued to a coach

A team which receives a total of eight (8) card points within one season shall be penalized three (3) points in its division standings.

A team with twelve (12) card points shall be penalized an additional three (3) points in its standings.

A team with sixteen (16) card points shall be penalized an additional three (3) points in its standings and shall be reviewed by the Sportsmanship Review Committee for further disciplinary action.

5.2.01(e) Suspensions

Game suspensions apply and carry forward to all NVYSL-sanctioned matches including any championship matches (playoffs, MTOC, and Nashoba Cup matches). If necessary, coach and player suspensions carry over to the next season in which a coach or player is active in the NVYSL.

5.2.01(f) Sportsmanship Review

The Sportsmanship Director will review referee reports for all RED cards issued, and for cumulative YELLOW cards issued, to determine whether a Sportsmanship Review Committee hearing is necessary to consider further action.

5.2.02 Electronic or Mechanical Noisemakers

Use of electronic or mechanical noisemakers during a match is prohibited. People who use noisemakers are showing their enthusiasm and support for their team, but the other team often sees these actions as unsporting behavior. A match referee has the option to stop a match and request that the coach of a team tell the team's fans to stop using noisemakers.

5.2.03 Late Arrivals

Each team should arrive at the field at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled time for the match. If either team is not prepared to take the field by 5 minutes after the scheduled start time or the availability of the field, that team shall Forfeit with a 4-0 loss. If the team does arrive before the referee leaves the area, then the referee may conduct a shortened match (which will not count toward competitive standings, i.e., the Forfeit stands), utilizing the time until the next scheduled match.

5.2.04 Forfeits

A team that Forfeits a match or matches shall be fined as described below. This fee may be waived on a case by case basis by the NVYSL President. The fine is payable at the end of the season.

- 1) A team that plays at least 70 percent of its matches shall be fined \$50 for each Forfeit match.
- 2) A team that plays less than 70 percent of its matches but at least 50 percent of its matches shall be fined \$200.
- 3) A team that plays less than 50 percent of its matches shall be fined \$500 and its Club shall be placed on probation for the

next two seasons. If a second offense occurs in either of the next two seasons during the probation period, then an appropriate action will be determined by the Sportsmanship Review Committee.

SECTION 6. Glossary

Abandoned match

A match that is terminated prior to completion of playing time. Abandoned matches will not be continued at a later time.

Age Group

Defined by MYSA, the age and grade requirements for players to participate.

Blended Divisions

A combined Division, such as a Division 1/Division 2 (D12).

Club

A NVYSL affiliated soccer program.

Club Affiliation Material

The required materials that a Club must submit to MYSA including, but not limited to, Fee Submission Form, Player File Upload, Initial Payment, Annual Leadership Report.

Competitive play

Teams registered with NVYSL to play in Division 1.

Credentialed

Formally credentialed by Mass Youth Soccer, Mass State Referee Committee, or US Soccer.

Effective Date

The date of the current revision of these policies.

Excessive Goal Differential (EDG)

The winning team scoring greater than or equal to seven (≥ 7) goals more than the losing team. That is, the maximum goal differential limit without being considered Excessive is 6.

Field Marshal

A designated individual enlisted to speak up on behalf of the referee in accordance with the [Field Marshal](#) policy.

Forfeit

A match that is not played due to policy violations.

Game Report

The report a referee files in Arbiter after a match is played.

Guest Player

A player temporarily added to a team using the Player Pass Policy.

Host Team

The team temporarily adding a Guest Player.

Ineligible Player

An unregistered player, registered player not eligible to play, or a player not meeting the Player Pass Policy.

Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC)

A Spring Season tournament held by MYSA

Mass Youth Soccer (MYSA)

The governing body of which NVYSL is affiliated.

NVYSL Valid Team Approved Roster

A team roster approved by the NVYSL Roster Processor.

PG

Post grad - Players that are within 1 year out of high school.

Player Pass

The NVYSL policy that enables flexibility in personnel movements on a per-match basis, while respecting the sanctity and integrity of the NVYSL Valid Team Roster. A Host Team may, for one match at a time, host Guest Players from another Team in their Club.

Postponed match

A match that is suspended and able to be played at a later time.

Recreational play

Teams registered with NVYSL to play in Divisions 2 and below.

Seasonal Calendar

The published NVYSL calendar for the spring or fall playing season.

Suspended match

A match that is stopped prior to full running time. The match may be resumed at a later time.

Technical Area

On the Team side of the field, an area 6ft from sideline and 8ft from half line.

Team

All of the players listed on a Valid Team Roster. Guest players are part of a Team when using the Player Pass Policy.

Unscheduled Match

A match that is listed in the NVYSL schedule as “Unscheduled”. Unscheduled matches may appear throughout the regular schedule in flights with an odd number of teams.

Valid Team Roster

A roster approved by the NVYSL Roster Processor.



NOTES


