

# Discipline and Appeals Manual



National Association

## A Manual for NCYSA Members

*Published by the North Carolina Youth Soccer Association  
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### **To NCYSA Member Associations:**

This Manual is designed for the entire membership of NC Youth Soccer (NCYSA). It is very important that you read the D&A Manual, and review with your players, parents, and coaches. There are special sections for Competitive Soccer; Parliamentary Procedures; Code of Conduct; Suggested Sanctions and Penalties; and Racism and Discriminatory incidents. (Some pages are designed to be printed as stand-alone flyers.)

We strongly suggest you makes copies of this Manual and/or the flyer pages, making each person and teams in your Association aware of the NCYSA Rules and Code of Conduct prior to the start of each season.

Fact: Your Association's education at the local level can help alleviate major problems later!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email. The D&A Administrator in the NCYSA State Office is Mark Moore – 336-856-7529 x 228 – [mark@ncsoccer.org](mailto:mark@ncsoccer.org).

Thank you in advance,

Larry Taylor,  
NCYSA D&A Chairperson

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# **North Carolina Youth Soccer Association – Core Ideology and Envisioned Future**

## **Purpose**

Providing youth the skills to be successful in life.

## **Values**

- Integrity
- Safety
- Fun
- Service
- Respect
- Commitment

## **Vision**

By being the best youth soccer state association in the US, soccer will become the sport of choice for NC youth.

## **Mission**

Provide the ideal environment for all youth to grow and excel through soccer.

# Section 1

## Discipline and Appeals Overview

NC Youth Soccer (NCYSA) Discipline and Appeals (D&A) program is overseen by the VP Challenge on the Executive Board. He is supported by the Manager of D&A who makes the day-to-day decisions, and an Office Staff person who administers the program for the Association.

D&A Chairman – Larry Taylor ([ltaylor@ncsoccer.org](mailto:ltaylor@ncsoccer.org))

D&A Administrator – Mark Moore ([mark@ncsoccer.org](mailto:mark@ncsoccer.org))

D&A is guided by the NCYSA Code of Conduct, the NCYSA Bylaws, Policies and Rules, as well as the policies of US Youth Soccer (USYS), the United States Soccer Federation (US Soccer, USSF or The Federation), and FIFA (the international governing body of soccer) in regards to charges and sanctions. The Code of Conduct should remind members that they are required to operate within the spirit of the rules, as well as the Laws of the Game.

**Education.** The philosophy of D&A is to educate its members – local Associations, Officers, Coaches, Parents and Players in all areas of soccer, especially ones involved with on a regular basis.

Education is provided through targeted email blasts, newsletter articles, and tools located on the NCYSA website. It is strongly encouraged that these educational materials be shared with the local membership.

**Sanctions.** For those who violate the Code of Conduct, Bylaws and Rules of NCYSA, sanctions can be imposed in the form of, but not limited to: game sit-outs, fines, volunteerism on the local level, and/or completing an educational presentation before a group. Egregious violations could result in expulsion from the program.

***FACT: If any individual is suspended from activities by NCYSA, that suspension is carried throughout the membership of US Youth Soccer, and any affiliate member of US Soccer, as directed by The Federation.***

## Section 2

### NCYSA Code of Conduct

The NCYSA Code of Conduct must be read and understood by all Officers, Administrators, Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Managers, Parents, and Players of each NCYSA member Association. Coaches and Managers should review this material with their players and parents at their initial team meeting. Players and parents added to the team after those dates, should be schooled in the document(s) as soon as possible.

The Code of Conduct has been prepared as a guide to the principles and expectations of NCYSA and is intended to apply to everyone involved in NCYSA activities regardless of their role or affiliation. Adherence to the spirit as well as the letter of the Code is required. Persons unwilling to abide by the Code of Conduct should reconsider their involvement in NCYSA activities.

## 2A - Principles and Expectations

- 1) NCYSA believes in the principles of fair play, ethical behavior and the right of every individual to fully enjoy the sport of soccer without undue interference from others.
- 2) NCYSA recognizes that participation in competitive activities is a source of strong feelings which will often lead to misunderstandings, disagreements and other conflicts. However, NCYSA also believes that every participant has a duty to respect the right of competitors to hold conflicting views.
- 3) NCYSA therefore expects its coaches, players, Referees and spectators, as well as their friends and families to deal with conflicts in a spirit of good sportsmanship and to cooperate in promoting the enjoyment of soccer to the greatest extent possible.
- 4) NCYSA expects adherence to the spirit, the letter of its Rules and the Laws of the Game. Unfair, rowdy, violent, illegal, dangerous and/or unsportsmanlike behavior, racial discrimination will not be tolerated, whether on the field of play or away from the playing area.
- 5) NCYSA expects all participants to show respect for opponents, regardless of their skill. Since NCYSA activities usually involve children from a very young age and since children are influenced by the behavior of adults, adult participants will be held to the very highest standards of conduct.

## 2B – Unacceptable Conduct

- 1) Vulgarity by coaches, players, or spectators directed towards anyone.
- 2) Harassment of referees, coaches or players by anyone.
- 3) Debasing or misconduct towards referees, coaches, or player by anyone.
- 4) Physical violence or the threat of violence directed toward anyone or encouraged by anyone.
- 5) Verbal or physical assault on a Referee. Physical assault is defined as any physical contact initiated by a player, coach, team official, spectator, elected officer, or appointed official.
- 6) Consumption of alcoholic beverages in and around the player area before, during or after a youth match, in addition to adherence to local venue rules and regulations.
- 7) Use of illegal drugs under any circumstance.

## 2C – Coaches

Coaches are responsible for their own conduct, as well as the conduct of their Assistant Coaches, Players, Team Managers, and Spectators.

***Fact: Did you know as a coach, you can be cautioned or sent off for the conduct of your spectators, as well as having the match abandoned and/or terminated?***

The behavior of the coach is the role model for player and spectator behavior. The coach can exert strong player and spectator control by the example he/she sets, and by a few words of caution directed to the appropriate place when necessary.

## 2D – Parents

Parents (and all adults/spectators) can have a tremendous influence on the children as they play the game of soccer. The role of the parent/spectator is to positively support their child and all players, with minimal negative impact. Yelling or screaming directed toward any individual – player, opponent, referee or other spectators **will not be tolerated!** Please set a proper example for your child, by asking

the question: “Is this the type of behavior I would exhibit anywhere else?” If the answer is “no”, then you probably shouldn’t be doing it at a youth sporting event.

***Fact: Did you know that you can receive the same sanctions as a coach or player for inappropriate behavior? As an adult, you would be held to a higher standard!***

## **2E – Referees**

As NCYSA expects and supports good conduct from its players, coaches and spectators, we also expect Referees to use their authority in a fair and honorable way, to maintain acceptable conduct on the sidelines, as well as on the field, and follow US Soccer’s Code of Ethics.

Indiscriminate red cards (or ejections) should not be the standard, nor should repeated, idle threats of ejection. However, Referees are expected to use their authority without hesitation when necessary to maintain order at matches.

NCYSA supports the authority of a Referee to dismiss any coach, player or spectator from the area of the match for failure to comply with the NCYSA Code of Conduct and/or the Laws of the Game, and to terminate the match, if necessary. Referees are expected, whenever possibly, to advise coaches of any unacceptable conduct and to give the coach an opportunity to correct the situation before taking other corrective action.

NCYSA maintains the Referee’s report of the match (match report and subsequent send off reports) are deemed accurate. D&A will use those reports, and solicit additional information (if needed) to determine sanctions for incidents. It is imperative that Referees send their reports as soon as possible through the appropriate online channels.

Referees shown to have misused their authority will be held in violation and reported to the State Referee Committee Chairman for possible sanctions.

## **Section 3**

### **Responsibilities of NCYSA Member Associations**

#### **The D&A Liaison**

Each NCYSA member is required to have a D&A Liaison designated to handle Discipline and Appeals issues. They would be expected to help educate the member Association on the NCYSA Code of Conduct, Rules, and expectations within that Association and NCYSA. The D&A Liaison is also encouraged and expected to attend at least one D&A training program offered by NCYSA throughout the year. Each Liaison must familiarize themselves with their member Association Bylaws/Policies and Procedures. They will need to determine the correct procedures for conducting a hearing within their association with appropriate timelines.

#### **3A – Incidents Within One Association**

NCYSA Discipline and Appeals will not hear an incident/matter involving a member Association’s own members until due process within that association (Due Process Meeting or Full Hearing, and right of appeal) has been completed. This includes the member Association providing the following to all involved parties:

1. Procedures for Protests/Complaints

2. Allegations of violation of the member Association’s Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and/or Code of Conduct.
3. A Full Hearing on the allegations.
4. The Appeal process following the Full Hearing. This must include having the right to appeal to NCYSA, and ultimately to USSF following a decision from the member association.

Each member association is strongly encouraged (but not required) to adopt procedures for hearings and appeals substantially similar to those set out in this manual.

***Fact: NCYSA must be notified of any suspensions, fines or other disciplinary action taken by a member Association.***

***Fact: unless stated in the details of the sanction, all suspensions are honored by other NCYSA member Associations, US Youth Soccer, and all affiliates of USSF.***

**Rationale for Determining a Full Hearing – Involving One Association (Internal Matter)** - Upon receiving a formal complaint from your association membership against another member of your own association, you may determine the need for a full hearing. Not every complaint needs to go to a full hearing. Some “smaller” matters can be settled by the President, the Board of Directors or others (depending on your Association’s Rules and governing documents). However, you must remember these two things:

1. Any decision made by an individual and/or your Board can be appealed to a Full Hearing within your Association, and ultimately to NCYSA (if your Association refuses to act on the appeal).
2. Any person accused of a violation of Rules, Code of Conduct, etc., and is sanctioned, they must have an opportunity to face their accuser (either in person or via electronically) and give their side of the story and to have the ability to rebut evidence by the accuser.

If the incident is serious enough, a Full Hearing should take place, using the guidelines below.

### **3B – Procedures for a Full Hearing, Involving Incidents in One Association**

***For a Full Hearing, this checklist may be used to ensure that due process is given to all parties.***

- 1) Determine if the protest/complaint meets the criteria for a hearing, and notify association leadership (President, D&A Liaison) of the filed protest/complaint.
- 2) Provide all parties involved (complainant, accused), your association’s procedures for protests/complaints.
- 3) Provide all parties the alleged violation of association’s Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, and/or Code of Conduct.
- 4) Schedule and notify all parties of the proposed hearing date, time, and location according to the time frame outlined in your Bylaws/Rules. Proper time frames must allow participants enough time to mount a defense and give them reasonable time to schedule for the hearing. If no time frame is specified, use NCYSA’s Procedural Rules for hearings (located elsewhere in this NCYSA D&A Manual).

- 5) Assemble an odd numbered, unbiased panel comprised of association officials, and/or other unbiased individuals.
- 6) Advise the accused of the panel members prior to the hearing in accordance with your Bylaws/Rules. If no time frame is specified, use NCYSA's Procedural Rules for hearings (located in this NCYSA D&A Manual), which is 5 days in advance of the hearing.
- 7) Allow the accused the option to claim a biased panel member and request a replacement.
- 8) Collect expected testimony and distribute to all parties at least 2 days in advance.
- 9) Render panel findings following the hearing and distribute to all parties within 15 days of hearing. Include instructions for appealing the panel's decision. Provide all parties the appeal process following the hearing. Include the option to appeal the decision to NCYSA and USSF.
- 10) Notify NCYSA of ruling.

### **Member Association's Decision Appealed to NCYSA**

If a member Association's decision is appealed to NCYSA, the NCYSA D&A Chairperson, Manager, or Administrator will notify the member Association, upon receipt of the appropriate appeal paperwork. After the member Association has received notification of an appeal, they shall forward copies of the evidence, findings and decisions regarding the matter to the D&A Administrator at the State Office. All pertinent data, evidence and transcripts must be forwarded within seven (7) days of the appeal notification. NCYSA Appeals Procedures will be provided to all parties.

### **3D – The Appeals Procedure for Incidents Involving One Association**

The appeal fee established by the NCYSA Board of Directors is three hundred dollars (\$300.00, certified check, cashier's check or money order), non-refundable. The fee must be included with the Notice of Appeal forms and statements submitted to NCYSA. Appeals of a decision involving one Association will be heard by the NCYSA Executive Board (hereafter referred to as The Board) and the following procedures will be followed:

1. Within ten (10) days of the issuance of the written decision of a local association D&A Committee, the State Office must receive in writing an initial Notice of Appeal and the appeal fee (as stated above). Such fee shall not be returned.
2. Upon receipt of the initial Notice of Appeal and fee, the State Office shall notify the NCYSA D&A Chairperson and Manager of the Appeal.
3. The NCYSA D&A Chairperson and/or Manager shall then forward the Appeal to the Board to be addressed. The BOARD reserves the right to address Appeals with a minimum of three (3) members of the BOARD.
4. The local Association issuing the original decision shall prepare a complete record of the Hearing in the matter and provide a copy to all parties to the appealed action.
5. At the time the local Association sends a copy of the Record to all parties, NCYSA shall send to the Appellant a notice that within fifteen (15) days of the mailing of the Appeal Record, the Appellant must designate in writing each error claimed to have been made in the Hearing and must further provide any argument in support of any claimed error that the Appellant wishes the

NCYSA Executive Board to consider. The Appellant must also serve a complete copy of this designation of error and argument upon the opposing party.

6. The opposing party shall have an additional ten (10) days to provide a response to the Appellant's assigned errors and argument and the opposing party shall serve its response on the Appellant and the State Office.
7. When all responses have been received, the State Office shall provide a copy of the record and all party's responses to each member of the BOARD Appeals Panel.
8. The BOARD shall set a date to meet either in person or by telephone to address the appeal. The meeting shall not be held less than five (5) days after receipt by all members of the BOARD of the material of the appeal unless all members of the BOARD agree to an earlier meeting.
9. At the BOARD meeting, a decision regarding the appeal shall be made by a majority vote of the BOARD. A written decision of the BOARD shall be rendered within five (5) days of the meeting by the Chairperson of NCYSA Discipline and Appeals. The BOARD may determine if: (a) the appeal process as outlined in the Manual was conducted properly, (b) all parties of a local D&A Hearing received due process as outlined in this Manual, (c) affirm the Hearing Panel decision, (d) may Reverse the Hearing Panel Decision, (e) may Reverse and Remand for a new hearing, the Panel's Decision, (f) may reconsider penalties imposed, or (g) may Affirm the Panel decision, but remand the case for reconsideration of the penalty imposed. Appeal of any decision of the BOARD is to the US Soccer Federation Appeals Committee.

The decision of any local association Hearing Panel/D&A Committee shall be in effect and binding, including the imposition of any penalties during the pendency of the appeal process, unless the BOARD specifically orders the decision stayed pending review. The BOARD shall only order the decision stayed if after a preliminary review, the BOARD finds by clear and convincing evidence that the Appellant will suffer irreparable harm without a stay and the Appellant is likely to prevail upon the merits of the appeal.

### **3E – Incidents Between Two or More Associations**

Upon receipt by the NCYSA State Office (D&A Support Staff), of a complaint alleging violation of NCYSA, US Youth Soccer, USSF Constitution, By-laws, Rules and Regulations, Procedures, Code of Conduct, Referee Abuse or Referee Assault by an individual or entity over which NCYSA has jurisdiction, the matter will be turned over to the D&A Chairperson. (When there are disputes and grievances by or among member Associations, NCYSA reserves the right for mediation to be used when appropriate.)

1. The D&A Manager or their designee shall review the complaint and determine whether it appears to adequately state an allegation of actionable misconduct on the part of the person or entity over which NCYSA has jurisdiction.
2. If the complaint is found to be inadequate, a written statement informing the Complainant of the decision not to proceed with a D&A Hearing will be sent. This decision may be appealed to the NCYSA Executive Board for Review.
3. If the allegations in the complaint are found to be adequate to demonstrate, if verified, an actionable violation of stated areas above, a hearing will be scheduled to address the complaint. The State Office shall issue a notice of the accused party stating that a complaint has been received, indicating:
  - a) The alleged facts of the violation;

- b) The provision of the Constitution, By-law, Rule, Regulation, Procedure, or Code of Conduct allegedly violated;
  - c) The potential sanctions involved;
  - d) A statement that a hearing will be set before a Hearing Panel (Panel) of the D&A Committee will be sent to the Accused and Complainant, notifying them of the date, time and place of hearing, via email.
  - e) In the initial notification, both parties will be provided with a copy of the hearing procedures, rights, duties, responsibilities and requirements of the Hearing Process.
4. The notification to an accused party of the hearing procedures of the D&A Committee shall specify, at a minimum, the following information:
- a) The fact that the accused is entitled to a hearing before a Panel of neutral and unbiased members from various member Associations.
  - b) Notification of the following timeline (inserted elsewhere in this Manual) for the hearing details, statements, witness attendance/statements, claim of panel member bias, reschedule request, brief summary of testimony, the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses, the right to telephone testimony, request for an audio recording of the hearing, and final decision of the panel.

### **3F – Timeline for a Discipline and Appeals Hearing (All Days are Business Days)**

*Please see the Timeline Chart elsewhere in this Manual.*

1. Once the D&A Manager determines a hearing will take place, all parties (Complainant, Accused, appropriate Association Officers) will receive notice of the allegations. The Hearing will be scheduled no earlier than ten (10) days after this notification.
2. The D&A Administrator will solicit neutral and unbiased members for the D&A Panel and set a Hearing date.
3. Notification to the Complainant and Accused at least five (5) days before the hearing date of the identities of the panel members.
4. Any claim of bias against any of the designated members must be received in the State Office at least seventy two (72) hours prior to the scheduled date and time of the hearing or any such claim is waived.
5. Notification that the Complainant and Accused are entitled to assistance at the Hearing, including the assistance of legal counsel, to advise and consult, if desired. *NOTE: Legal counsel is NOT allowed to conduct the hearing for the Complainant or Accused – only assist and consult!*
6. A request for the Hearing to be rescheduled for any reasonable conflict may be made if requested no later than five (5) days before the scheduled Hearing date. A request to reschedule the Hearing made within five (5) days will be granted only upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances.
7. Notification that at the Hearing both parties may call witnesses to offer relevant evidence on their behalf – either in person or telephonically. Witnesses may also submit sworn written statements on their behalf, and may submit other written documentation. Notification of the names of witnesses, sworn statements, and a brief summary of the expected testimony must be provided to the State Office at least seventy two (72) hours in advance of the Hearing. The State Office will provide both parties with opposing statements/testimony at least forty eight (48) hours in advance of the hearing. Any such witness testimony whose information has not

been provided in compliance with this timeline may be disallowed by the Panel in its discretion.

8. Notification that all parties have the right to confront and cross-examine any witness offering evidence on behalf of the opposing party.
9. Notification that the Panel may, upon the stated objection of the opposing party, refuse to admit any evidence, including sworn statements or written documentation for which there is no accompanying witness testimony, on the grounds that the opposing party has been denied an opportunity to confront and cross-examine the witnesses purporting to create such evidence.
10. Notification that any written material found to be objectionable by the opposing party must be objected to in writing and such written statement of objections provided to all parties and the Panel prior to the taking of evidence at the Hearing. The Panel shall not consider any material that has been properly objected to that does not allow the opposing party to confront and cross-examine such evidence unless the Panel specifically finds that the proffered evidence is reliable and is unavailable in any other form. For a witness to be unavailable, the Panel must be provided documentation that the presence of the witness was requested by the party seeking to use the statement and a statement from the witness that they were requested to attend the hearing and that they refuse to do so, either in person or telephonically. If the Panel allows the introduction of any such material, previously objected to by the opposing party, then the proponent of such evidence, at the request of the opposing party, must answer any and all reasonable questions of the opposing party as to the circumstances surrounding the taking of the statement and the relationship of the person making the statement to the party. All such information so elicited may be considered by the Panel in determining what weight, if any, the Panel should give to the substance and credibility of the proffered evidence.
11. Request an audio recording of the Hearing must take place at least forty eight (48) hours prior to the Hearing.
12. Notification that any decision by the Panel shall be made in writing and rendered to all parties within fifteen (15) days of the Hearing, with instructions as to any appeal rights a party may have, if the decision is adverse to the party.

### **3G – Procedural Rules of the Hearing**

The following procedural rules shall be followed, as well as any rules and procedures of the D&A Committee that may be revised and published from time to time.

1. Hearing Panel members (Panel) shall first determine the admissibility of any witnesses and evidence that have been previously objected to by any party and shall make a determination for purposes of the hearing as to its admissibility.
2. For any witness who is to appear telephonically, an agent of the D&A Committee shall telephone the contact number of the listed witness, prior to the scheduled commencement of the hearing, confirming the witness' availability, and shall ask the witness to remain near the telephone so they may give evidence if called during the next two (2) hours.
3. The D&A Administrator shall record the Hearing if requested by either party (see above).
4. The times for Hearing testimony are as follows:
  - a) The Complainant, will have up to 45 minutes to present their side.
  - b) The Accused, will have up to 45 minutes to present their side.

- c) The Complainant, will have 10 minutes to rebut.
- d) The Accused, will have 15 minutes for surrebuttal.
- e) The Complainant, will have 5 minutes for surrebuttal. This allows 60 minutes for both parties.
- f) The Accused is allowed a short closing statement.
- g) The Complainant is allowed a short closing statement.
- h) A brief question and answer period from the panel and Chairman directed to both parties.
- i) End of Hearing.
- j) Both parties are free to leave, the panel will discuss the evidence presented.
- k) A letter with the decision of the panel will be sent within 15 days.

**NCYSA D&A Hearing Timeline – Days are “Business Days – Monday – Friday”.**

*All Notification Deadlines are “Previous Days”. (Example, if a Hearing is on Monday, the 8<sup>th</sup>, then the Notification Deadline is Monday the 1<sup>st</sup>.)*

**All Parties Advised of Panel Members – 5 days**

<b>Hearing</b>	<b>Notification Deadline</b>
Monday	Monday
Tuesday	Tuesday
Wednesday	Wednesday
Thursday	Thursday
Friday	Friday

**Notification of Bias Against Panel Members – 72 Hours (3 Days)**

<b>Hearing</b>	<b>Notification Deadline</b>
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday

**Request to Reschedule Hearing – 5 Days**

<b>Hearing</b>	<b>Notification Deadline</b>
Monday	Monday
Tuesday	Tuesday
Wednesday	Wednesday
Thursday	Thursday
Friday	Friday

**72 Hours (3 Days) to State Office: Witness Notification to State, Brief Summary of Testimony**

**48 Hours (2 Days) to all Parties: Sworn Statements, Written Materials from Each Party, Telephonic Testimony Notification, Request for Digital Recording**

<b>Hearing Day</b>	<b>Notification – 72 Hours</b>	<b>Notification - 48 Hours</b>
Monday	Wednesday	Thursday
Tuesday	Thursday	Friday
Wednesday	Friday	Monday
Thursday	Monday	Tuesday
Friday	Tuesday	Wednesday

### 3H – The Appeal Procedures

In order to appeal a decision of any state or local D&A decision, the appeal must include the formal Appeal Document Form and a certified check or money order for \$300 (made out to NCYSA).

1. A Decision by the D&A Manager or their designee that the allegations of a complaint are inadequate to proceed with a Hearing, are appealable to the NCYSA Executive Board, whose determination shall be final. These procedures shall be followed:
  - a) Within ten (10) days of the mailing of the notification of the decision not to proceed, the initial Complainant must send, in writing to the State Office a notice of appeal regarding the decision, a request to review the decision, and the appropriate appeal fee (non-refundable).
  - b) The State Office will gather all documentation utilized in formulating the decision not to proceed, copy all such material and distribute to all members of the NCYSA Executive Board and the appealing party.
  - c) All members of the Executive Board shall review the material, then either affirm the decision not to proceed; reverse the decision; solicit further information from the appellant (must be provided within ten (10) days); or conduct a conference call with other members of the Executive Board in order to render a decision.
  - d) A simple majority of votes shall determine the decision of the Executive Board. If a majority vote is not obtained, the appeal is deemed denied and the decision of the D&A Manager is affirmed not to proceed with the complaint. The decision of the Executive Board is final and is not subject to appeal, unless such decision is deemed by the USSF Appeals Committee to be in conflict with the rules of the USSF, in which case appeal lies to the USSF Appeals Committee.
2. A decision from any Panel of the D&A Committee (State or Local decision) shall use the following procedures:
  - a) Within ten (10) days of the issuance of the written decision of the Panel, the State Office must receive, in writing an initial notice of appeal and the appropriate appeal fee (non-refundable). The State Office will notify the D&A Chairperson (on the NCYSA Executive Board) and the D&A Manager of the appeal.
  - b) The State Office will gather a complete record from the Association issuing the original decision (local Association) and provide a copy to all parties (Appellant, local Association, D&A Chairperson, Executive Board, D&A Manager). The State Office will continue to provide copies to all parties during the appeal process, as they arrive. The NCYSA Executive Board (Board) reserves the right to address appeals with a minimum of three (3) members of the Board.
  - c) The Appellant will have fifteen (15) days of the mailing of the original decision to designate in writing to the State Office, each error claimed to have been made in the original hearing, and must further provide any argument in support of any claimed error they wish the BOARD to consider.
  - d) The opposing party (local Association) shall have an additional ten (10) days to provide a written response (to the State Office) to the appellant's assigned errors and argument.
  - e) The State Office will make sure all parties and the Board have all materials and responses.

- f) The Board shall set a date to meet either in person or by telephone to discuss and decide the appeal. The meeting shall not be held less than five (5) days after receipt by all members of the Board of all material, unless all members of the Board agree to an earlier meeting.
- g) At the Board meeting, a decision regarding the appeal shall be made by a majority vote. A written decision of the Board shall be rendered within five (5) days of the meeting and sent to the State Office, the D&A Chairperson and D&A Manager. The Board may determine: (1) If the appeal process as outlined in the Manual was conducted properly; (2) If all parties of a D&A Hearing received due process as outlined in this Manual; (3) Affirm the Hearing Panel decision; (4) Reverse the Hearing Panel Decision; (5) Reverse and remand the Hearing Panel's decision for a new hearing; (6) Reconsider penalties imposed; (7) Affirm the Panel decision, but remand the case for reconsideration of the penalty imposed.
- h) Appeal of any decision of the Board is to the USSF Appeals Committee.

The decision of any Hearing Panel of the D&A Committee shall be in effect and binding, including the imposition of any penalties, during the pendency of an appeal, unless the Board specifically orders the decision stayed pending review. The Board shall only order the decision stayed if after a preliminary review, they find by clear and convincing evidence that the appellant will suffer irreparable harm without a stay and the appellant is likely to prevail upon the merits of the appeal.

### **3I – Legal Counsel at Hearings**

No member association, commissioner, league official, team official, spectator, league, team, Referee, player or this association may invoke the aid of any lawyer or courts of any state or of the United States without first exhausting all available remedies within the body of organized soccer (i.e. United States Soccer Federation).

### **3J – Order of Appeals**

The order of appeals is as follows:

1. Member Association or State Association D&A Panel
2. NCYSA Executive Board
3. USSF

## **Section 4 Tournaments**

In most cases, Discipline and Appeals incidents are handled at the tournament level. Below is information on how various tournaments are to handle their Discipline and Appeals.

### **4A – Incidents Involving NCYSA Hosted Tournaments**

**1. State Cup Tournament Committee (SCTC):** When NCYSA is hosting a tournament (State Cups, etc.), the VP of Tournaments and Travel will designate this committee prior to the start of the event. The NCYSA Tournament Committee (SCTC) consists of the VP Tournaments and Travel and at least two (2) additional Executive Board members of his/her choosing. The SCTC

will be consistent throughout the seasonal State Cup's tournament duration. The SCTC will act upon all duties as listed in the rules, including but not limited to hearing any protests filed and any appeals to sanctions determined by the State Cup D&A Committee. The SCTC's decisions are FINAL for the purpose of tournament play and play will continue even if such decisions are appealed.

**2. Onsite Administration Committee (OAC):** This committee consists of the Site Director, Referee Coordinator and the NCYSA Representative. The OAC implements the tournament rules as defined at each official tournament site. Any questions not detailed in the rules, the OAC would consult with the SCTC for further guidance.

**3. State Cup Discipline and Appeals Committee (SCDA):** The VP Tournaments and Travel (Tournament Director) will designate this committee prior to the start of the tournament. It will consist of three appointed individuals. The Tournament Director would also sit on this committee as an Ex-Officio member. This committee will be consistent throughout the seasonal State Cup's tournament duration. The NCYSA Staff D&A Support person will act as an administrative assistant and will aid with any tasks needed by the SCDA. The SCDA will be the body that determines any additional sanctions for red cards given during the tournament, any ejections, and any other disciplinary conduct decisions.

**4. Protests and Appeals:** No protests will be entertained concerning interpretation of the Laws of the Game by the Referee. The SCTC will rule upon any other protests. Protests must be made in writing no more than one hour after the conclusion of the match being protested, and the protest must be accompanied by \$100 in cash. The \$100 will only be returned if the protest is upheld.

Refer to the National Championship Rules for anything not otherwise covered in these rules.

**5. Inclement Weather:** The OAC, in conjunction with the SCTC has the discretion of modifying game times, locations, canceling in whole or in part, the individual games or the tournament due to inclement weather or field conditions.

#### **4B – Incidents Involving NCYSA Sanctioned Tournaments**

Incidents occurring at Sanctioned Tournaments within North Carolina hosted by member Associations, are adjudicated by the D&A Committee of that tournament. Send offs at Sanctioned Tournaments do not carry over to NCYSA League or State Cup play, but could carry over to the next year's tournament, at the tournament's discretion.

All issues, ejections, etc., should be written up and sent to both the Tournament Administrator and D&A Administrator at the State Office. More serious incidents, (i.e. fighting, discrimination issues, etc.) could be reviewed by NCYSA Discipline and Appeals for further action and sanctions. Referee Assault and Referee Abuse are always handled on the State level by the NCYSA D&A Committee, and must be reported to the tournament Assignor, SYRA and NCYSA Discipline and Appeals Administrator at the State Office.

## **Section 5**

### **Disciplinary Sanctions, The Send Off Process**

Suggested disciplinary sanctions are determined by the NCYSA Discipline and Appeals Chairman, the NCYSA Discipline and Appeals Manager and/or the Board (see the Chart elsewhere in this Manual).

Below are descriptions of suggested MINIMUM sanctions, as well as details of the Send Off Process.

# North Carolina Youth Soccer Association

## Suggested Disciplinary Chart

*(Note: These are MINIMUM Sanctions)*

Offense	Coach/Player/Spectator	MINIMUM Discipline
Fighting	P	2 Games
Fighting	C, S	3 Games
Foul/Abusive Language	C, P, S	1 Game
Threatening Gestures	P	1 Game
Threatening Gestures	C, S	2 Games
Assault of a Coach/Team Official (Not Fighting)	C, P, S	2 Games
Referee Assault	C, P, S	3-Months
Referee Abuse	C, P, S	3 Games
Referee Abuse of Minor	C, P, S	6 Games
Referee Assault of a Minor	C, P, S	3 Years
Verbal Threats	C, S	2 Games
Verbal Threats	P	1 Game
Violent Conduct	P	1 Game
Violent Conduct w/Intent to Injure	P	5 Games
Serious Foul Play	P	1 Game
Removing Team From Field	C	1 Game
Racial or Discriminatory Abuse (see elsewhere in this Manual)	C, P, S	5 Games
Spitting At/Spitting On Opponent	C, P, S	2 Games/5 Games

## 5A – Disciplinary Rulings and Suggested Punishments

These are minimum suggested guidelines. Member Association’s guidelines may be more stringent. Suggested punishments may be altered based on specific information. As per the FIFA DISCIPLINARY CODE, Second Title, Chapter II, Subsection III, Article 98: “*Facts contained in match officials’ reports are presumed to be accurate.*”

1. Players, coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials found guilty of Referee assault and/or Referee abuse of a game official shall be subject to penalties set out in USSF Policy 531-9, Misconduct toward Game Officials, as stated in Section 8 of this Manual.
2. Players guilty of pushing, striking and/or fighting other players, coaches, team officials, league officials or spectators before, during or after a game shall receive a minimum two (2) game suspension. Coaches, Spectators, and other adults found guilty of pushing, striking, and or/fighting shall receive a minimum three (3) game suspension.
3. Players, coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials found guilty of using profanity, either by word or sign, against other players, coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials before, during or after a game shall receive a minimum one (1) game suspension.
4. Players, found guilty of making threatening gestures against other players, coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials before, during or after a game shall receive a minimum one (1) game suspension. *These gestures do not include Referee Abuse.*
5. Coaches and/or spectators found guilty of making threatening gestures against other players, coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials before, during or after a game shall receive a minimum two (2) game suspension. *These gestures do not include Referee Abuse.*
6. Players guilty of violent conduct committed either off the field or on the field against an opposing player while the ball is dead or not in the area of play for the ball, or on the field while the ball is in play, or serious foul play shall receive a minimum one (1) game suspension.
7. Players found guilty of violent conduct with the intent to seriously injure or encouraging such conduct against other players, coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials before, during or after a game shall receive not less than a five (5) game suspension.
8. Coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials found guilty of making threatening gestures or using threatening language or profanity to players, coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials before, during or after a game shall receive a minimum two (2) game suspension.
9. Coaches, spectators, team officials or league officials found guilty of violent conduct with the intent to seriously injure or encouraging such conduct against any players, coach, spectator team officials or league officials before, during or after a game, shall receive a minimum of a one (1) year suspension.
10. Spitting at an opponent will carry a minimum 2-game suspension. Spitting on an opponent will carry a minimum 5-game suspension.
11. In Classic and Select play, the D&A Chairperson or Manager will investigate every match when a coach or team official removes their team from the field of play before the end of a match. A one (1) game suspension shall be given to the coach, plus penalties for forfeiting the match. If a coach or team official abandons a match for safety reasons, the team must request the D&A Chairperson or Manager to investigate the matter within forty-eight (48) hours of the match to determine if sanctions apply.

## 5B – The Send-Off Process for Competitive Matches

There are two types of send-offs in a match.

1. A player ejection – they will be shown a red card.
2. An adult ejection – they will NOT be shown a red card.

*REMEMBER – An individual may be sent off or sanctioned AFTER the match is completed!*

**“Facts contained in match officials’ reports are presumed to be accurate.” – FIFA Disc. Code**

**The above statement is the anchor in which Discipline and Appeals determines the sanctions for any incidents in matches.** If you feel the need to provide a statement regarding an incident, ejection, etc., you may email the D&A Administrator at the State Office. Please reference the match, age, match number, date, teams involved and any information you wish to share.

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### **The Referee Issues an Ejection.**

Most ejections are relatively straight forward. Two cautions. Someone denies a goal. The sanctions on these ejections are straightforward. However, there are red cards and ejections that are more complex, and egregious. The process is explained below.

### **Players that Receive Red Cards and/or are Ejected**

A player will remove their jersey and remain on the team bench. It is the responsibility of the coach/team for the player’s conduct after the ejection. While on the bench, should the player’s conduct warrant it, the Referee can then have the player removed from the pitch. The player must be escorted away by an individual who has completed the Risk Management process (team manager, coach, assistant coach, team official). If there isn’t one available, then with a parent. **NOTE: Coaches and/or Assistant Coaches failing to control ejected players on their bench could be subject to sanctions by NCYSA Discipline and Appeals. Should the offending player or their team not comply with this directive, the Referee will have the ability to abandon the match, which could result in a forfeit (win for the opponent).**

### **Sanctions are Determined for the Ejection**

Using the Suggested Disciplinary Chart (*Note – these are suggested MINIMUMS*) found elsewhere in this D&A Manual, the D&A Manager will read the Referee’s report and make a determination on the sanction. The Discipline and Appeals Administrator at the State Office sends out a letter to the Association (President, D&A Liaison, Executive Director and DOCs) via email, as well as to the individual (email or USPS).

### **For More Egregious Ejections**

Foul and Abusive Language. Violent Conduct. Referee Abuse or Assault. Based on the initial write up from the Referee, Discipline and Appeals may solicit more information from the RR (Center Official), SAR (Senior Assistant Referee), and JAR (Junior Assistant Referee). This additional information will help clarify any questions on the incidents and help to determine appropriate sanctions.

## **Appeal the Sanction of an Ejection**

There is an Appeal Form that must be completed, and sent to the State Office with a \$100 non-refundable appeal fee. The appeal goes directly to the Executive Board for adjudication. Sanctions remain in place unless the Executive Board feels they are detrimental to the individual in question. The imposed sanction stays in effect unless:

1. The Board can electronically review the evidence provided and determine that the appellant will suffer irreparable harm without a stay and the appellant is likely to prevail upon the merits of the appeal.
2. The evidence is provided in a timely manner in which the Board can review electronically before said sanction is in force.
3. There is no guarantee that the Board can be brought together for such a review.

## **5C – League Play and Cards, Send Offs – General Information**

1. Cards accumulated during league play apply to league play only.
2. Card accumulation is wiped clean at the beginning of each seasonal year, but unfulfilled penalties are not.
3. Penalties associated with card accumulation are enforced during the next scheduled and played NCYSA game(s).
4. Penalties associated with card accumulation that are unfulfilled at the end of a seasonal year, will carry over to the following seasonal year.
5. If an individual receives a send off for Team A, during the next season or seasonal year, that individual moves to Team B, any penalty follows the individual to the new team, regardless of the association.
6. If an individual plays/coaches for more than one team (Team A and Team B) and is sent off while with Team A, any sanction is applied to the individual's next match with Team A. If Team B plays before Team A, the individual may participate with Team B.
7. If a player is required to sit out a game because of an accumulation of cards or send off, that player **MUST** be in attendance at the next scheduled game to fulfill the sit out obligation. A player not in attendance remains ineligible until the player attends and sits out the match. *NOTE: Have the Referee mark the player having attended the game and sitting out on the match report.*

## **5D – Cards and Accumulation for Players During League Play**

Players are subject to card accumulation sanctions when receiving cautions and ejections during league play. They are as follows:

1. If a player receives yellow cards in four (4) separate matches in the seasonal year, they receive a one (1) game sit out. *NOTE: Two yellow cards in one match (equaling a red card) do not count towards this total.*
2. If the same player receives two (2) subsequent yellow cards in the same seasonal year, they receive an additional one (1) game sit out – and a one (1) game sit out for each subsequent two (2) yellow cards thereafter.
3. If a player receives a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) red card in a seasonal year, they will sit out the required sanctions, and a one (1) match sit out for the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) red card.

4. Players receiving red cards for spitting, violent conduct, serious foul play, abusive language, threatening gestures and/or discriminatory actions and remarks may have additional sit outs imposed by the D&A Chairperson. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

A seasonal year is defined as:

- 15U-19U G – Fall only; Sanctions not fulfilled carry over from Fall to the next Fall.
- 15U-19U B – Spring only; Sanctions not fulfilled carry over from Spring to the next Spring.
- 11U-14U B/G – Fall and Spring seasons. Fall sanctions carry over to the next Spring. Sanctions not fulfilled at the end of the Spring are carried over to the next Fall season.

Players must be present at matches to fulfill sit outs. If a player transfers from one association and/or team to another, the card accumulation and sanctions follow that player.

Players that play for more than one team (dual rostered, club pass, etc.) will receive card accumulations for all teams they play with. Once an accumulation level is met, they will sit out the next game they are scheduled to play in – regardless of the team. NOTE: players that play for more than one team who receive a red card/ejection (while playing for Team A), will serve the sanctions for that ejection for the same team in which the ejection occurred (Team A). They may play for their “other” team (Team B) if that team is scheduled to play before Team A.

## **5E – Association Obligations for Card Accumulation**

If a player, coach or team accumulates any of the following:

- A Player receives a sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) yellow card or a fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) red card;
- A Coach receives a fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) caution or a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) send off;
- A Team has had three (3) or more players reach the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) yellow card or fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) red card;

The Association President or their designee must meet with the offending party/parties within ten (10) days of receiving the notice from the State Office. Within seven (7) days of the meeting, the Association President or their designee must provide the D&A Administrator with a written report of the offending party/parties completing one of the tasks below:

- Attend a rules clinic by an approved Referee of the NCSRA; or
- Complete four (4) hours of community service at the discretion of the Association President or their designee.

## **5F – Cards and Accumulations for Coaches During League Play**

Coaches are subject to card accumulation sanctions when receiving cautions and ejections during league play. They are as follows:

1. If we receive notice of a coach who receives three (3) cautions in separate matches in the seasonal year, they receive a one (1) game sit out. NOTE: Two cautions in one match (equaling an ejection) do not count towards this total.

2. If the same coach receives one (1) additional caution in the same seasonal year, they receive an additional one (1) game sit out – and a one (1) game sit out for each subsequent caution thereafter.
3. If a coach receives a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) send off in a seasonal year, they will sit out the required sanctions, and a one (1) match sit out for the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) send off.
4. Coaches receiving send offs for abusive language, threatening gestures and/or discriminatory actions and remarks may have additional sit outs imposed by the D&A Chairperson. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

A seasonal year is defined as:

- 15U-19U G – Fall only; Sanctions not fulfilled carry over from Fall to the next Fall.
- 15U-19U B – Spring only; Sanctions not fulfilled carry over from Spring to the next Spring.
- 11U-14U B/G – Fall and Spring seasons. Fall sanctions carry over to the next Spring. Sanctions not fulfilled at the end of the Spring are carried over to the next Fall season.

Coaches must be out of SIGHT and SOUND of the team in which they received the ejection, in order to fulfill sit outs. If a coach transfers from one association and/or team to another, the card accumulation and sanctions follow that coach.

Coaches that coach for more than one team will receive caution/ejection accumulations for all teams they coach. Once an accumulation level is met, they will sit out the next game with the team in which they received the accumulation plateau. NOTE: If a coach receives a send off (while coaching for Team A), will serve the sanctions for that ejection for the same team in which the ejection occurred (Team A). They may coach for their “other” team (Team B) if that team is scheduled to play before Team A, as long as it’s not within sight and sound of Team A.

## **5G – Cards and Accumulations for Players During State Cup Play**

Accumulations, and penalties carry over from State Cup to State Cup ONLY (not to and from League Play). Players with penalties participating on teams that advance to USYS Regionals or Presidents Cup Regionals, would serve those sanctions at those events (hereby noted as CUP events). Penalties incurred at the Regional Tournament events would carry over to the next event – either Nationals or the next State Cup event (CUP events).

- Any player sitting out for an ejection, must be in attendance at that team’s next scheduled State Cup/Regional/National match in order to fulfill the sanction.
- If a player receives a red card, they must sit out their next CUP event.
- Depending on the reason for the ejection, additional sit out penalties may be added, which would carry to the next qualifying event.
- If a player receives a second red card, they will sit out for the ejection, and have an additional sit out for accumulating two (2) red cards at a CUP event. The sit out for the ejection carries over to the next qualifying event. The sit out for the accumulation carries over to the next State Cup match.
- 15UG-18UG Seasonal Year = Fall Cups and subsequent Regional/National events.
- 11UB-19UB, 11UG-14UG Seasonal Year = Spring Cups and subsequent Regional/National events.

- Players that transfer from one association or team to another, the card accumulation and/or penalties will follow that player.

## **5H – Cards and Accumulations for Coaches During State Cup Play**

Accumulations, and penalties carry over from State Cup to State Cup ONLY (not to and from League Play). Coaches who receive penalties/accumulations while coaching for a team that advances to USYS Regionals or Presidents Cup Regionals, would serve those sanctions at those events, for that team (hereby noted as CUP events). Penalties incurred at the Regional Tournament events would carry over to the next event – either Nationals or the next State Cup event (CUP events).

1. Any coach sitting out for an ejection, must be out of sight and sound of that team’s next scheduled State Cup/Regional/National match in order to fulfill the sanction.
2. They may coach for another team, but that match must be out of sight and sound of the team where they received the ejection.
3. Depending on the reason for the ejection, additional sit out penalties may be added, which would carry to the next qualifying event.
4. If a coach receives a second ejection, they will sit out for the ejection, and have an additional sit out for accumulating two (2) ejections at a CUP event. The sit out for the ejection carries over to the next qualifying event. The sit out for the accumulation carries over to the next State Cup match.
5. 15UG-18UG Seasonal Year = Fall Cups and subsequent Regional/National events.
6. 11UB-19UB, 11UG-14UG Seasonal Year = Spring Cups and subsequent Regional/National events.
7. Coaches that move from one association to another, or are assigned to another team, the card accumulation and/or penalties will follow that coach.

## **5 I – Cards and Misconduct in Challenge and Recreation Matches**

The Challenge Scheduling Leagues will administer sanctions for misconduct according to their rules and procedures. Exceptions are Referee Abuse and Referee Assault, which is handled by NCYSA Discipline and Appeals.

Recreation misconduct will be handled by the local Association and/or Recreation Scheduling League. Exceptions are Referee Abuse and Referee Assault, which is handled by NCYSA Discipline and Appeals.

# **Section 6**

## **Misconduct Toward Game Officials**

NCYSA Discipline and Appeals will handle all misconduct towards game officials, according to USSF Policy 531-9.

Referees shall transmit a written report of the alleged assault or abuse, or both, within 48-hours of the incident (unless there is a valid reason for later reporting) to:

1. If occurring at a sanctioned League Match in North Carolina, to the State Referee Administrator and the NCYSA Discipline and Appeals Administrator.

2. If occurring at an in-state Event/Tournament (in North Carolina), to the Event/Tournament Chairperson, Event/Tournament Referee Assignor or Liaison, on the day of the incident, and within 48-hours to the State Referee Administrator, and the NCYSA Discipline and Appeals Administrator.

Misconduct may occur before, during and after the match, including travel to and from the match. Misconduct may also occur at later times when directly related to the duties of a game official as a Referee involved in NCYSA Youth Matches (not including Professional League Member activities).

- “Referee” includes: All currently registered USSF Referees, Assistant Referees, 4<sup>th</sup> Officials or others duly appointed to assist in officiating in a match.
  - Any non-licensed person serving in an emergency capacity as a Referee.
  - Any Club Assistant Referee.
1. Hearings will be held in accordance to the guidelines stated in this Manual.
  2. Referee Assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a Referee.
    - a) Intentional Act shall mean an act intended to bring about a result which will invade the interests of another in a way that is socially unacceptable.
    - b) Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.
    - c) Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a Referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a Referee, head butting, the act of kicking or throwing any object at a Referee that could inflict injury, damaging the Referee’s uniform or personal property (car, equipment, etc.).
  3. Referee Abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a Referee or the Referee’s property or equipment.
    - a) Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a Referee: using foul or abusive language toward a Referee, spewing any beverage on a Referee’s personal property, spitting at (but non on) the Referee, or verbally threatening a Referee.
    - b) Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as “I’ll get you after the game” or “You won’t get out of here in one piece” shall be deemed Referee abuse.
  4. When an allegation of abuse or assault is received by the State Office, the accused shall be suspended and banned from participating or being involved in all NCYSA sanctioned matters until a hearing is conducted.

## **6A – Misconduct Toward a Junior Referee**

A Junior Referee is identified as being 17 years of age or younger. Abuse and Assault are defined the same as in Sections 6-2a-b-c, and 6-3a-b above.

In allegations of abuse and assault by an individual against a Junior Referee, the accused shall be suspended and banned from participating or being involved in all NCYSA sanctioned matters until a hearing is conducted, including, but not limited to: coaching, refereeing, managing a team, playing, or spectating.

Individuals found guilty of Abuse of a Junior Referee shall be suspended from all NCYSA sanctioned events for a period of no less than six (6) scheduled matches of the team playing when the abuse occurred. Should the individual be involved with more than one (1) team, then the suspension is for

ALL teams in which they are registered. The period of suspension may be modified at the discretion of the D&A Committee:

- If the team is a single season team and the suspension would carry over to the next season;
- If the team will not form in the next season;
- If the abusing individual is involved with multiple teams.

**NOTE: Adults are held to a higher standard in regards to misconduct toward a Junior Referee and these minimum sanctions will be upheld. Players (under the age of 18) involved in misconduct toward a Junior Referee will handled on a case-by-case basis by NCYSA Discipline Appeals.**

## **6B – Hearings Regarding Misconduct of Referees**

1. When any amateur or professional player, coach, manager, club official or game official assaults or abuses a Referee, the original jurisdiction to adjudicate the matter shall vest immediately in the responsible State Association which is affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation.
2. When an allegation of assault is verified by the State Association, the person is automatically suspended until the hearing on the assault/abuse.
3. The State Association must hold a hearing within thirty (30) days of the verification of the abuse or assault, or if applicable, the thirty-day period provided by the subsection below (Misconduct of Referees at Events and Tournaments). If the State Association does not adjudicate the matter within that period of time, original jurisdiction shall immediately vest in the Federation's Appeals Committee to adjudicate the matter, to which the same provisions as to the term of suspension shall apply.
4. Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind the automatic suspension.
5. In cases of report of Referee abuse, a hearing is held only when requested by the alleged assailant or otherwise deemed appropriate by the convening authority.

## **6C – Misconduct Toward Referees at Events and Tournaments**

1. In the event an assault or abuse of a Referee occurs in an event outside the alleged offender's home state, the Referee shall:
  - a) Immediately notify the Event/Tournament Chairperson;
  - b) Forward a copy of the game report and their comments on the incident to the Event/Tournament Chairperson.
2. The Event/Tournament Chairperson shall have the right to immediately convene a hearing at the site of the Event/Tournament, at which the alleged offender, the coach of the alleged offender when the offender is a player, and the game official should be present. Information presented at this hearing shall promptly be relayed to the alleged offender's State Association President by the Event/Tournament Chairperson, both orally and in writing. However, failure to provide written information shall not restrict the offender's home State Association from taking action with regard to any Referee abuse or assault.
3. Final jurisdiction shall vest with the alleged offender's home State Association. A hearing shall be held by that State Association within thirty (30) days of receipt of the initial report of the abuse or assault on a Referee.
4. In the event an assault or abuse of a Referee occurs in an event in North Carolina, the Referee shall:

- a) Immediately notify the Event/Tournament Chairperson and onsite Referee Assignor/Liaison.
  - b) Forward a copy of the game report and their comments on the incident to the Event/Tournament Chairperson and onsite Referee Assignor/Liaison.
5. The Event/Tournament Chairperson shall have the right to immediately convene a hearing at the site of the Event/Tournament, at which the alleged offender, the coach of the alleged offender when the offender is a player, and the game official should be present. Information presented at this hearing shall promptly be relayed to the NCYSA President and the NCYSA D&A Administrator by the Event/Tournament Chairperson, in writing. Failure to provide written information could result in consideration of future sanctioning of the event, and shall not restrict NCYSA Discipline and Appeals from taking action with regard to any Referee abuse or assault.
  6. Final jurisdiction shall vest with the NCYSA Discipline and Appeals. A hearing shall be held within thirty (30) days of receipt of the initial report of the abuse or assault on a Referee.

### **6D – Penalties and Suspensions for Misconduct Toward Referees**

Individuals found guilty of committing Referee assault are automatically suspended as follows:

1. For a minor or slight touching of the Referee or the Referee’s uniform or personal property, at least three (3) months from the time of the assault.
2. For any other assault, at least six (6) months from the time of the assault, unless stated otherwise in this section.
3. For an assault committed by an individual and the Referee is 17 years of age or younger, at least three (3) years. If the assault results in serious injuries, at least five (5) years.
  - a) If the assault is committed by a youth player, the D&A Chairperson has the authority to amend the suspension lengths above.
4. Adjudicating the matter of assault by an adult may not provide a shorter period of suspension, but if circumstances warrant, may provide a longer period of suspension.

Individuals found guilty of committing Referee abuse are automatically suspended as follows:

1. The minimum suspension period for Referee abuse shall be at least three (3) scheduled matches, within the rules of that competition.
2. NCYSA Discipline and Appeals may provide a longer period of suspension when circumstances warrant (e.g., habitual offenders, egregious behavior, etc.)

### **6E – Appeals for Penalties and Suspensions of Misconduct Toward Referees**

Individuals found guilty of committing Referee assault or Referee abuse may appeal to the USSF, following the procedures of Federation Policy 705 within ten (10) days from receipt of the decision of the hearing.

## **Section 7**

### **Discrimination Policy**

For this purpose, Discrimination will be defined as anyone who offends the dignity of a person or group of persons through contemptuous, discriminatory or denigrating words or actions concerning race, color, language, religion, gender, origin or sexual orientation.

When an allegation of Discrimination is verified by NCYSA, the person is automatically suspended until the hearing on the act of Discrimination. The hearing will take place within thirty (30) days of the notice.

Anyone found guilty of Discrimination will receive the following suspensions.

1. Players
  - a) 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Minimum five (5) matches
  - b) 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – 180 day suspension. Must complete Diversity training course before reinstatement.
  - a. 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – One (1) year suspension and probation for remainder of Youth Eligibility.
2. Adults. Includes, but not limited to Coaches, Referees, Spectators
  - a) 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Minimum ninety (90) days suspension
  - b) 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – 180 day suspension. Must complete Diversity training course before reinstatement.
  - c) 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – Lifetime Suspension.

## Section 8

### Recruitment

Recruitment of players is defined as any effort to induce a registered player of any team under the jurisdiction of this association to transfer from their team to a new team. Recruiting is any action or statement, made by any team official, as defined either verbally or in writing that encourages or entices a player to register with a particular coach, team, club and/or organization. Recruitment of players by coaches or team officials, officers or representatives is prohibited with the defined exceptions:

1. Any recruitment of players 14U and younger is prohibited and illegal. There is no acceptable window of time where the recruitment of players 14U and younger is allowed. The time period between the first Monday after State until July 31 is NOT an acceptable recruiting window for 14U and younger age groups.
2. Recruitment of all boys players 15U and older will only be allowed between the first Monday after State Cup Finals, until July 31. If the player being recruited is on a team involved in USYS and/or Presidents Cup Regional play, or the National Championship of either event, then an additional three (3) weeks will be added to the recruitment time.
3. If a team participating in USYS and/or Presidents Cup Regionals is not actively recruiting or is not involved with the try out process, teams cannot recruit their players.
4. If a team participating in USYS and/or Presidents Cup Regionals is actively recruiting or is involved with the try out process, any team can recruit their players.
5. After July 31 (or the additional three (3) week period due to Regional competition), recruiting is prohibited and illegal.
6. Recruitment of all girls players 15U and older will only be allowed between January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>. If the player being recruited is on a team involved in USYS and/or Presidents Cup Regional play, or the National Championship of either event, then an additional three (3) weeks will be added to the recruitment time.

Team Officials guilty of illegal recruitment shall be dealt with by NCYSA Discipline and Appeals.

#### **8A – Guidelines for Recruiting**

1. Team representatives include parents and players.
2. Definition of recruiting will include but shall not be limited by the following:
  - a) A player participating in any type of unauthorized practice or try out with a team other than the one the player is currently registered. *This restriction will not apply for a player who freely chooses to try out for another team during appropriate open window for recruitment.*
  - b) An offer or promise of college scholarships, free uniforms, discounted team fees, and/or negative statements which could affect the decision of a player regarding choice of teams.
  - c) Guest players must have a signed authorization (Guest Player Roster) from their current teams coach to participate in practices, camps, or games with another team. The coach of the team in which the guest player is playing, is responsible for the proper completion of this form or risk being found guilty of recruiting.

## **8B – The Following are Generally Considered as Acceptable**

### **Pre-Try Out Meetings**

- General Public Announcement
- Direct Communication with current registered players within their own Association

### **Pre-Try Out Workouts/Camps**

- Open to anyone not NCYSA Registered
- Open to Registered players within their own Association
- Open to Registered players outside their own Association, with permission from Association currently registered with (Guest Player Roster)

### **Handouts**

- Handouts that are provided for ALL children in a school
- Handouts located in sporting goods or soccer stores
- Ad in a local paper

### **Public Announcements**

- Ad on local television, radio or social media
- Mass email to registered players within their own Association
- Email to children not registered to any NCYSA Member Association
- Mass communication that does not target any one player or group of players will not be considered recruiting. Example – YMCA seeking membership with NCYSA sends a mass email to their Y membership (which may or may not include households of registered players with another NCYSA member) to announce an upcoming soccer camp, or announce an open house event to share their plan for soccer should they become a member. This will not be considered recruiting.
- Any communication/email sent by a member association to its current registered families/households announcing try outs, promoting the virtues of said association, etc., will not be considered recruiting.
- A coach with Association “A” announces at the end of the season that they are leaving and moving to Association “B” to coach the next year, will not in and of itself be deemed as recruiting. Anything more than this simple announcement could be an infraction of the NCYSA recruiting rules.
- Association announces their slate of coaches for the upcoming year prior to the open period for NCYSA try outs will not be deemed as recruiting.
- Associations who purchase a commercial database/mailling list from a marketing firm or similar entity for the purpose of sending public notices about their association, open houses, announcing try outs, or general information will not be deemed as recruiting, should it be determined after the distribution that the list included households of children that are registered with a different NCYSA Association.
- Associations sending email notices to households of their current registered players will not be deemed as recruiting if the household also has a child registered with another NCYSA Member Association.

## **8C – The Following are Generally Considered Not Acceptable**

### **Public Announcements**

- Email targeted to specific players registered to other Associations
- Use of database for email/direct mail where there is a reasonable expectation that said database includes names of individuals that are registered with a different NCYSA Member Association. (Note: this does NOT apply to purchased, commercial databases)

### **Handouts**

- Handouts for PE classes only
- Handouts given to middle school and/or high school soccer coaches for them to give out to their players
- Middle school or high school coach that coaches with an NCYSA member cannot provide handouts or encourage their school players to try out with any specific Association
- Direct contact of any kind, at any time (includes enticement or encouragement to change Associations) with any 15U and older player currently registered with another association except during open recruiting period
- Allowing any player currently registered to a different association to participate in team training without a Guest Player Roster being properly executed.

### **General Statements**

- Associations who knowingly help their staff or other adults affiliated with same association facilitate efforts to intentionally recruit players from other associations will be held accountable for recruiting.
- Association having no prior knowledge, will generally not be held accountable for the actions of the association staff or affiliated adults who chose to knowingly or unknowingly engage in improper recruiting of players from other NCYSA Member Associations. This includes, but is not limited to individuals that are paid, serving in an official capacity or not serving in an official capacity.
- Associations can be held accountable where they have initiated, and or are aware of unacceptable conduct as it relates to recruiting which could result in a violation of the NCYSA Recruiting Policy.
- Anyone affiliated with an NCYSA Member Association that conducts training camps during the seasonal year must receive from players attending the camp (who are affiliated with other NCYSA Member Associations), a properly executed Guest Player Roster.
- Anyone affiliated with an NCYSA Member Association that conducts private training or operates a public training business may train players from other associations, but the instructor must not use the opportunity to encourage players to try out for any particular association, especially the one the instructor is affiliated with.

Violations of the NCYSA Recruiting Policy are not limited to those addressed above. Sanctions for illegal recruiting can include, but not limited to: probation, suspensions, loss of state cup competition, creating education pieces on recruiting and presenting to NCYSA peers at various NCYSA events and/or meetings, and possible fines for Member Associations found guilty of illegal recruiting.

## **Section 9**

### **Protests**

#### **What Constitutes a Valid Match Protest**

- Protests about the adequacy of the field. The objection must be made to the Referee before the start of the game.
- Protests about the neutrality of the Referee. The protesting coach must make his charges known to the Referee. If the Referee agrees and disqualifies themselves, the Senior Assistant will become the Referee. If the Referee does not feel there is sufficient conflict, then the only avenue of appeal is to protest to the assigning authority. Such appeals are not generally upheld.
- Protests about the eligibility of a player to participate. If a team uses an ineligible player in a match, the match is forfeited. Upon receiving a written Official D&A complaint, NCYSA Discipline and Appeals will act accordingly.
- Protests about technical errors by the Referee in applying the Laws of the Game during the match. The technical error must have affected or had the potential to affect the outcome of the match. The protest must be based on FIFA Laws of the Game. Referee interpretation of the Laws are not protestable.

#### **How to File a Match Protest**

- The protest must state the level of competition of the match (Classic, Select).
- Challenge and Recreation protests are submitted to those scheduling leagues and local associations.
- The protest must state the rule violation.
- The protest must be filed in writing, 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) after the match to: NCYSA – Attn: Assistant Director Classic – PO Box 18229 – Greensboro, NC 27419
- A fee of \$100.00 (certified check or money order) must accompany the written protest.
- Upon receipt of the protest, it will be forwarded immediately to the VP of Classic for investigation and preliminary decision.
- The person filing the protest will be notified of the preliminary decision.
- The preliminary decision is binding. An appeal may be filed within seven (7) days of receipt of the decision. The appeal must be in writing with a \$100.00 (certified check or money order), stating the reason for the appeal, and mailed to the State Office (address listed above). The appeal will go to the NCYSA Executive Board.