

North Carolina Youth Soccer Association

# Discipline and Appeals Manual



National Association

## A Manual for NCYSA Members

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*PO Box 18229 – Greensboro, NC 27419*

*136 Manley Avenue – Greensboro, NC 27407*

*336-856-7529*

[www.ncsoccer.org](http://www.ncsoccer.org)

**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 make copies of this Manual and/or the flier 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 efforts 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 Colin Ashley – [DA@NCSoccer.org](mailto:DA@NCSoccer.org)

Thank you in advance,

NCYSA D&A Staff

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## **Section 1: Discipline and Appeals Overview**

### **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** : Every individual in North Carolina who wants to play soccer can do so with a North Carolina Youth Soccer Association Member Club in a safe, enjoyable, and respectful environment that leads to a lifelong love and participation in the sport.

**Mission** : North Carolina Youth Soccer Association is committed to using the collective knowledge of our member organizations, our staff, and our Board to provide the best environment for North Carolina youth soccer players to grow and excel in soccer and in life.

**D&A Structure** : NC Youth Soccer (NCYSA) Discipline and Appeals (D&A) program is overseen by the Vice President Chairman on the Executive Board. He is supported by the Discipline and Appeals Coordinator who makes the day-to-day decisions, and an Office Staff person who administers the program for the Association.

D&A Administrator – Colin Ashley ([DA@ncsoccer.org](mailto:DA@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) regarding 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, particularly regarding the Laws of the Game and NCYSA rules of competition.

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 at the local level, and/or completing an educational presentation before members of their club/ organization. Egregious violations could result in expulsion from the program.

## **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 educated in these 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 while maintaining a respectful and safe environment for all participants.
- 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 both the spirit and the letter of its rules as well as 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) Debasement of or misconduct towards referees, coaches, or players 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. Referee assault is defined as any unwanted physical contact initiated by a player, coach, team official, spectator, elected officer, or appointed official towards a referee
- 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: As a coach, did you know the conduct of your spectators may lead to the referee abandoning the match?***

The behavior of the coach is the role model for player and spectator behavior. A coach can set a good example for his players and spectators by maintaining a professional and respectful attitude before, during, and after a match. Remember: these children look up to you and your example!

### **NCYSA Coach Code of Ethics:**

I will ensure that my on-field behavior adheres to NCYSA values.

I will take responsibility for the behavior of my players, coaching staff, and spectators.

I will address referees in a respectful manner and encourage others to do so.

I will take responsibility for the safety of my players, and never place them in undue danger.

I will not engage in irresponsible behavior that brings myself, my club, NCYSA, or the sport of soccer into disrepute.

## 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 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!***

## **NCYSA Spectator Code of Ethics:**

I will ensure that my behavior adheres to the NCYSA values.

I will help to maintain a positive atmosphere by cheering for my team and refraining from disparaging our opponents, their coaches and spectators, or our match officials.

## **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 send off any coach or player as well and eject any 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 possible, 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 supplemental / Red Card 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.

## **NCYSA Referee Code of Ethics:**

I will do my best to officiate the match in accordance with the word and spirit of the Laws of the Game as well as NCYSA policy.

I will endeavor to be fair and make decisions from a spirit of impartiality.

I will take responsibility for the safety of the players as well as the integrity of the game.

I will cooperate with my fellow match officials to ensure that the game is served effectively

I will complete match reports and supplemental reports accurately and completely within 24 hours of my match.

I will not engage in irresponsible behavior that brings myself, NCYSA, or the sport of soccer into disrepute.

## **2F – Players**

### **NCYSA Player Code of Ethics:**

I will compete with a positive attitude and demonstrate good sportsmanship in my interactions with teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators.

I will let my parent, guardian, or coach know of any misconduct that puts my safety or the safety of others at risk.

I will win and lose with dignity and respect.

## **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.

## **Section 4 : Appeals & Hearing Procedures**

### **4A – Internal 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.
2. A full hearing on the allegations.
3. The appeal process follows 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, 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.

#### **4B – Procedures for a Full Hearing, Involving Internal 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 the 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 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 composed 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 it 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 with 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 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.

### **4C – The Appeals Procedure for Internal 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.

#### **4D – 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 Coordinator 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. 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.
  - f. 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.

#### **4E – Timeline for a Discipline and Appeals Hearing (All Days are Business Days)**

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

- a) Once the D&A Coordinator 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.
- b) The D&A Administrator will solicit neutral and unbiased members for the D&A Panel and set a Hearing date.
- c) Notification to the Complainant and Accused at least five (5) days before the hearing date of the identities of the panel members.
- d) 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.
- e) 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!
- f) 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.
- g) 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 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.

- h) Notification that all parties have the right to confront and cross-examine any witness offering evidence on behalf of the opposing party.
- i) 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.
- j) 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 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.
- k) Request for an audio recording of the Hearing must take place at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the Hearing.
- l) 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 averse to the party.

#### **4F – 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 dismissed, the panel will discuss the evidence presented.
- k) A letter with the decision of the panel will be sent within 15 days

#### **4G – The Appeal Procedures**

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 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.

#### **4H – 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).

#### **4I – 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 5 : Misconduct & Discipline (Match Related)**

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) for NCYSA League Matches.

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

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, sanctions follow that player.  
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.

**North Carolina Youth Soccer Association  
Suggested Disciplinary Chart  
(Note: These are MINIMUM Sanctions)**

Offense Description	Player/Coach Team Official/ Spectator	MINIMUM Discipline
Removing Team From Field	C	1 GAME
Denying a Goal or Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity by Foul or Handling	P	1 GAME
Receiving a Second Caution in the Same Match	P / C / TO	1 GAME
Offensive/Insulting/Abusive Language or Actions	P / C / TO / S	1 GAME
Irresponsible Behavior	C / TO / S	1 GAME
Verbal Threats &/or Threatening Gestures	P	2 GAMES
Verbal Threats &/or Threatening Gestures	C / TO / S	3 GAMES
Serious Foul Play	P	2 GAMES
Violent Conduct	P	3 GAMES
Biting or Spitting at/on Opponent	P / C / TO / S	5 GAMES
Violent Conduct	C / TO	5 GAMES
Fighting	P	4 Games
Flagrant Fighting and / or Flagrant Acts of Violence	P	6 Games
Fighting	C / TO / S	3 MONTHS
Referee Abuse	P / C / TO / S	6 GAMES
Referee Abuse (Minor Referee)	P / C / TO / S	8 GAMES
Referee Assault	P / C / TO / S	NCYSA D&A Hearing
Referee Assault (Minor Referee)	P / C / TO / S	NCYSA D&A Hearing
Use of a Banned Term	P	5 Games
Use of a Banned Term	C / TO / S	30 Days
Abuse of a Banned Term & / Or Discriminatory Abuse	P	1st OFFENSE 7 GAMES
Abuse of a Banned Term & / Or Discriminatory Abuse	C / TO / S	1st OFFENSE 90 DAYS

## 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 as defined by USSF Policy 531-9\*\*, Misconduct toward Game Officials shall be subject to penalties set out in the following policies.
2. **Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity by Foul or by Handling:** Where a player commits an offense against an opponent within their own penalty area which denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offender is cautioned if the offense was an attempt to play the ball or challenge for the ball; in all other circumstances (e.g. holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.) the offending player must be sent off. Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offense, the player is sent off wherever the offense occurs (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area).
  - a. Players guilty of being sent off for Denial of an Obvious Goal-Scoring Opportunity by Foul or by Handling shall receive a minimum one (1) game suspension.
3. **Receiving a Second Caution in the Same Match:**
  - a. A Player, Coach, or Team Official guilty of receiving a second caution in the same match shall receive a minimum one (1) game suspension.
4. **Serious Foul Play:** when a player commits a tackle or challenge that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality must be sanctioned as serious foul play and receive a minimum two (2) game suspension.
5. **Violent Conduct:** when a player uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball, or against a team-mate, team official, match official, spectator or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made. This does not include acts of Fighting, which are defined below and carry additional penalties.

In addition, a player who when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the use of force was negligible. (Negligible contact can be determined as no offense or a Yellow Card based on the Referee's judgment of the mode and force of the contact). Coaches, Team Officials, and Spectators engaging in actions such as striking or using an object to strike another individual, grabbing, or pushing another individual are guilty of Violent Conduct.

  - a. Players guilty of Violent Conduct shall receive a minimum three (3) game suspension.
  - b. Coaches, Team Officials, or Spectators guilty of Violent Conduct towards any individual excluding Game Officials shall receive a minimum five (5) game suspension.
6. **Fighting:** includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
  - (1) An altercation between 2 or more parties that includes swinging, hair pulling, headbutting, hitting, punching and/or kicking.
  - (2) An attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, feet, head or equipment.

- (3) An attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made.  
(4) An attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate; and  
(5) Leaving the bench area and coming onto the playing area during a fight (whether or not they participate in the fight)."

- a. Players guilty of Fighting shall receive a minimum six (6) game suspension.
- b. Coaches, Team Officials, and Spectators guilty of Fighting shall receive a minimum three (3) month suspension.
- c. A player guilty of a **flagrant** fighting offense shall receive a minimum six (6) game suspension.
  - i. A fighting act may be categorized as flagrant when a participant's actions are severe or pronounced enough to indicate an additional sanction is necessary.
  - ii. Other aggravating factors such as continuing to commit acts of fighting after others have intervened to deescalate the situation may also indicate a flagrant fighting offense.

ADDITIONAL MATCH (ES) MAY BE ADDED TO THOSE WHO INSTIGATE OR FURTHER INFLAME A FIGHT IN PROGRESS

7. **Biting/Spitting at/ Spitting on:**
  - a. Players, Coaches, Team Officials, or Spectators guilty of biting, spitting at, or spitting on any individual (excluding Game Officials) shall receive a minimum five (5) game suspension.
8. **Foul/Abusive/Insulting Language:** Verbal or physical gesture, which is offensive, abusive, insulting, rude, hurtful, disrespectful; punishable by a sending-off (red card). This does **not** include communicating threatening words or actions or instances of racial or discriminatory abuse
  - a. Players, Coaches, Team Officials, or Spectators guilty of offensive/abusive/insulting language shall receive a minimum one (1) game suspension.
9. **Verbal Threats/ Threatening Gestures:** Any threatening statement or gesture, explicit or implicit, directed towards an individual NOT including a Game Official. This includes jumping at or gesticulating in a wild manner towards someone or running / charging at an individual for the purpose of intimidation.
  - a. A Player guilty of verbal threats/ threatening gestures will receive a minimum two (2) game suspension.
  - b. A Coach, Team Official, or Spectator guilty of verbal threats/ threatening gestures will receive a minimum three (3) game suspension.
10. **Racial or Discriminatory Abuse:** For this purpose, discrimination will be defined as the act of offending 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.

Anyone found guilty of discrimination will receive the following suspensions. Offenses are defined as either:

- Use of a banned term: typically, in an incidental, non-targeted manner
- Abuse of a banned term/ discriminatory abuse: using banned terminology in an abusive, targeted manner towards another individual

### **Use of a banned term**

Players : 1st Offense – Minimum five (5) matches

Coaches, Team Officials, Spectators, Game Officials : 1st Offense – Minimum thirty (30) days suspension

### **Abuse of a Banned Term/ Discriminatory Abuse**

Players : 1st Offense- Minimum seven (7) matches

Coaches, Team Officials, Spectators, Game Officials : 1st Offense - Minimum ninety (90) days

**Individuals guilty of further use or abuse of banned terms will be subject to more severe sanctions.**

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 – Misconduct Towards Referees**

**Referee Abuse and Assault:** [USSF Policy 531-9](#)

NCYSA Follows US Soccer Policy 531-9 and all definitions, penalties and procedures within USSF Policy 531-9.

See the below policy from US Soccer.

# POLICY 531-9 / YOUTH & AMATEUR

# REFEREE ABUSE PREVENTION



## OFFICIAL U.S. SOCCER POLICY

### Policy 531-9 | Misconduct Toward Game Officials in Amateur Matches

**EFFECTIVE MARCH 2025** Adopted by the U.S. Soccer Board of Directors on November 22, 2024

## SECTION 1. GENERAL

Misconduct against Referees may occur before, during, and/or after the match, specifically when the Referee arrives at and/or departs the venue. Misconduct may occur also at later times when directly related to duties of a match affiliated with U.S. Soccer or its Organizational Members.

## SECTION 2. RULE APPLICATION

- (A) This policy shall supersede any inconsistent rules of Member Organizations that pertain to assault, abuse, or gross mistreatment upon Federation Game Officials (i.e., Referees) the manner and means of hearings, appeals, and rehearings in matters pertaining thereto. However, this policy does not supersede any codes of conduct, which may be enforced in addition to this policy.
- (B) Nothing in this policy rule shall be construed to restrict or limit any league, event/tournament or Member Organization from applying equal or greater restrictions to anyone not listed in section 4(a)(1) of this policy (i.e., a spectator associated with a club or team).
- (C) This policy shall not apply to players, coaches, managers, club officials, or league officials while participating in Professional League Member activities. U.S. Soccer Policy 202-2 covers participants in professional matches.

## SECTION 3. TERMS AND REFERENCES

As used in this policy:

1. "Referee" includes the following:

- (A) All currently registered USSF Referees, assistant Referees, fourth officials, match officials, or others duly appointed (i.e., by Member Organizations) to assist in officiating in a sanctioned match or a similar USSF-affiliated activity (e.g., scrimmage). A Referee who is not certified or registered with U.S. Soccer or Member Organization may not be covered by this policy. Refer to the below section for emergency situations.
- (B) Any non-licensed, non-registered person serving in an emergency capacity as a Referee or any club assistant Referee under USSF policies.
- (C) Any person serving in a Referee support function, such as Referee mentors, Referee coaches, and other Referee support staff at the venue.
- (D) All references to "Referee" henceforth cover the above definition for all U.S. Soccer policies only.

2. "Hearing" means a meeting of at least three neutral members, one of whom is designated or elected to serve as chairperson. The hearing shall be comprised by and conducted pursuant to guidelines established by the Federation and followed by the Member Organization.

3. For the purposes of this policy, a Referee is protected by U.S. Soccer policy from the time they arrive at the venue (which shall include the parking area), until their departure from the venue. For the purposes of this policy, "Protected Party" means a member of the Referee's family or household, or a guest of the Referee at the match or match venue. All U.S. Soccer policies are in addition to the local, state, and Federal laws.

4. Referee assault is any deliberate physical action against a Referee. Referee abuse is extreme, deliberate, and non-contact behavior that causes a Referee or Protected Party significant harm. Actions in this category may be subject to an immediate suspension, meaning that the perpetrator cannot appear at the next sanctioned match. Assault and abuse include, but not limited to, the following actions or behavior committed against a Referee or Protected Parties:

- (A) Imposing physical harm upon a Referee or a Protected Party, including by use of objects or equipment.
  - (B) Any act that endangers the Referee's physical wellbeing, whether deliberate or merely reckless.
  - (C) Any form of unwanted physical contact, including but not limited to pushing, hitting, striking, kicking, choking, or spitting at the Referee.
  - (D) Any behavior that constitutes a criminal offense under any applicable law.
  - (E) Threatening, either directly or in insinuation, physical harm, including by use of objects or equipment, to a Referee or a Protected Party or property. Threatening is defined as any statement or action that instills reasonable fear of acts of violence to a person's safety or property.
  - (F) Threats of harm or any retaliatory action against the Referee or their Protected Parties, including threat of exclusion from assignment or future participation opportunity.
5. Actions that do not meet above assault or abuse definitions, but cause a Referee or Protected Party harm, may be subject to U.S. Soccer's gross mistreatment framework. Gross mistreatment means any deliberate, non-contact behavior that is expected to cause harm to a Referee. Gross mistreatment includes, but not limited to, the following actions or behavior committed against a Referee or Protected Parties:
- (A) Severe or repeated harassment, including hate speech or discriminatory remarks based on race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, disabilities, or any other legally protected characteristic.
  - (B) Extreme verbal attacks that would cause emotional harm to a reasonable person.
  - (C) Approaching a Referee when they arrive or depart the venue with aggression (e.g., intimidation).
  - (D) Any form of cyberbullying, including spreading false information about the Referee, sharing the Referee's personal information (aka doxing), or publicly posting content that ridicules or mocks the Referee or uses hate speech.
  - (E) Questioning the Referee's character, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, or impartiality.
  - (F) Yelling insults, taunting, making, or expressing derogatory/belittling remarks towards a Referee.
  - (G) Pervasive action that belittles or undermines the Referee's authority or intended to cast doubt on the Referee.

## SECTION 4. JURISDICTION AND HEARINGS

### 1. General

- (A) When any amateur or professional player, coach, manager, club official or game official assaults, abuses or grossly mistreats a Referee, the original jurisdiction to adjudicate the matter shall vest immediately in the responsible Member Organization which is affiliated with the Federation.
- (B) When an allegation of assault or abuse is verified by the Member Organization the accused person is automatically suspended until the hearing on the assault or abuse.
- (C) The Member Organization must hold a hearing within thirty (30) days of the verification by the Member of the gross mistreatment, assault, or abuse or, if applicable, the thirty-day period provided by subsection (B)(3) of this section. If the Member 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.
- (D) Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind an automatic suspension for assault or abuse.

### 2. Events and Tournaments

- (A) In the event of assault, abuse, or gross mistreatment of a Referee occurs in an event outside the alleged offender's home state, the Referee shall (A) immediately notify the State Referee Administrator in his/her home state, and/or (B) forward a copy of the game report and his/her comments on the incident to the Event/Tournament Chairman.
- (B) 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 Member Organization by the Event/Tournament Chairperson, both

orally and in writing; however, failure to provide written information shall not restrict the offender's home Member Organization from taking action with regard to any Referee gross mistreatment, assault, or abuse.

- (C) Final jurisdiction shall vest with the alleged offender's home Member Organization. A hearing shall be held by that Member Organization within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the initial report of the gross mistreatment, assault, or abuse on a Referee.

## SECTION 5. PENALTIES AND SUSPENSIONS

Penalties for violation of this policy shall be assigned according to the Penalties Matrix in effect at the time the misconduct allegedly occurred, available on page 4. The Penalties Matrix will be managed by U.S. Soccer Staff and Secretary General and may be amended and updated at any time by U.S. Soccer's Technical Development Committee.<sup>1</sup>

## SECTION 6. APPEALS

A person who is found to have committed gross mistreatment, assault, and/or abuse may appeal to the Appeals Committee by following the procedures of Federation Bylaw 704 within fourteen (14) days from receipt of the decision of the Member Organization.

## SECTION 7. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ASSAULT, ABUSE, AND GROSS MISTREATMENT

1. Procedures for reporting of Referee assault, abuse, and/or gross mistreatment shall be developed and disseminated by the U.S. Soccer's Technical Development Committee.
2. Referees shall transmit a written report of the alleged assault, abuse, or gross mistreatment, or both, within 48 hours of the incident (unless there is a valid reason for later reporting) to the designee of the Member Organization and/or the State Referee Administrator.
3. For tournaments or special events, the Referee shall transmit a written report to the tournament director on the day of the incident and/or to the referee's home state SRA, if applicable, within 72 hours of the incident.
4. The Referee should include the following information in the report:
  - (A) Match details, including but not limited to team information, age group, score, and date.
  - (B) Detailed statement about the incident, including the definition of the behavior or action (i.e., assault, abuse, mistreatment).

The Competition Authority shall submit the following information to the Member Organization or SRA:

1. All documents, exhibits and other evidence in the case.
2. Copies of all rules, procedures, and bylaws used to support the charges and to conduct the hearing.
3. The notice of charges and/or hearing provided the defendant/appellant.
4. The decision of the hearing body and any appeals decisions.

If audio or video clips are made part of the record, there must be copies of any such video or audio delivered to the Federation without any editing.

If a written transcript has been prepared, it shall be included as part of the record.

The record must be in English. If Members accept documents in other languages, then the Member shall be responsible for providing English translations of the documents prepared by a neutral translator agreed to by the parties.

If the record is not submitted in accordance with this policy, the appeal timetable may be put on hold pending the completion of the record or the appeal may be dismissed. If the appeals timetable is put on hold, the appealing party may apply to the Federation to have their penalty suspended until the case is decided.

<sup>1</sup> Mandatory reporters under the Safe Sport Act must also report child abuse to law enforcement and to the U.S. Center for SafeSport ("SafeSport"), and must report any sexual misconduct, regardless of the age of involved.

# PENALTIES MATRIX



The **Penalties Matrix** defines consequences associated with physical and non-physical offenses against Referees.

## NON-PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

NON-PHYSICAL *	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Insulting, Belittling, Insinuating or Taunting Behavior Undermining Referee Authority	2	
Harassment, Intimidation, Retaliation, Abusive, or Threatening (Non Physical) Language	4	
Aggression, Attacking, Derogatory, Cyberbullying, Doxing or Threatening (Physical / Violence) Language	6	6 - 24 Months
Offensive or Discriminatory Act	10	12 - 24 Months

## PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Minor or Slight Deliberate Touching	3	1 - 6 Months
Pushing, Grabbing, Pulling, Squeezing, Pinching, Lightly Slapping, Use of Object in Non Striking Manner, or Physical Property Damage	10	6 - 24 Months
Hitting, Punching, Elbowing, Kicking, Biting, Spiting, Choking, Tackling, Throwing or Use of Object or Any Part of Body (Forearm, Knee, Head) in a Striking Manner		12 Months - Lifetime

(\*) **Disclaimer:** These are only a few examples of abuse – other actions or statements may also fall into this category.

### KEY PENALTY FACTORS

- Single offenses are at **minimum the prescribed game penalty or time penalty** for non red zone offenses
- Penalties can be **both game and time depending on severity / circumstances**
- Second time offenders receive **double punishment**
- Third time offenders receive a **lifetime ban**
- More than one offense at the same time is **at least the punishment for the most serious offense**
- Offenses against minors are automatically subject to a **“minor multiplier” resulting in triple punishment**
- **One offense warning per league** to be managed by states and leagues collaboratively
- Game consequences are **inclusive of 1 game penalty for any red cards given**
- Optionality for **50% penalty for first offense from a minor**

Please follow your current reporting structure – updated reporting procedure will be a part of Phase 3..

## **5C – The Send-Off Process for Competitive Matches**

Both players and coaching staff will be shown yellow and red cards for misconduct. Spectators engaged in misconduct should be reported by the referee to the coach, who will be responsible for the removal of the parent.

*REMEMBER – An individual may be sent off or sanctioned BEFORE or 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.

### **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**

The appeal process must go through the Association's DOC or D&A Liaison. The first step in the appeal of a sanction for an ejection is to provide email statements to the D&A Administrator from eyewitnesses. Opinions of the referee's ability are not considered appealable. The D&A Chairman will make a determination, based on the statements as well as the referee's supplemental report if there is sufficient cause to revise the sanction. If the Association still wishes to appeal, 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 to the D&A Chairperson who will make a final determination on the appeal. The Chairperson has the right to invoke a Disciplinary Hearing should they choose to do so, but will be at the sole discretion of the Chairperson and not required for Ejection Appeals.

### **5D – League Play and Cards, Send Offs – Sanction Enforcement**

1. If an individual is Sent 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.
2. 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.
3. If a player is required to sit out a game because they are sent off, that player **MUST** attend 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.***

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

If a player, coach, or team receives a red card or a significant number of yellow cards

The Association President or their designee is encouraged to 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, it is recommended that the Association President or their designee 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; and / or
- Complete four (4) or more hours of community service at the discretion of the Association President or their designee.

*The D&A Chair reserves the right to require additional corrective actions based on the severity of the offense(s).*

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

1. If a coach receives a second (2nd) red card in a seasonal year, additional sanctions may be enforced by the D&A Committee.
2. Coaches receiving red cards 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.

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.

**State Cup Play:** A comprehensive rule document for State Cup play can be found at:

<https://soccer.sincsports.com/TTCheckList.aspx?tid=STATENC&tab=5&sub=0&Page=1>

Not all Penalties carry over from State Cup to State Cup ONLY (not to and from League Play).

### **Major penaltie**

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

**Challenge Leagues:** 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. The Association is REQUIRED to report cases of Referee Abuse, Referee Assault, and serious misconduct by players, coaches, team officials, or spectators.

**Recreation Leagues:** 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. The Association is REQUIRED to report cases of Referee Abuse, Referee Assault, and serious misconduct by players, coaches, team officials, or spectators.

## **Section 6 : 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.

Anyone found guilty of discrimination will receive the following suspensions. Offenses are defined as either:

- Use of a banned term: typically, in an incidental, non-targeted manner
- Abuse of a banned term/ discriminatory abuse: using banned terminology in an abusive, targeted manner towards another individual

### **Use of a banned term by**

Players: 1st Offense – Minimum five (5) matches

Coaches, Team Officials, Spectators, Game Officials: 1st Offense – Minimum thirty (30) days suspension

### **Abuse of a Banned Term/ Discriminatory Abuse by**

Players: 1st Offense- Minimum seven (7) matches

Coaches, Team Officials, Spectators, Game Officials: 1st Offense - Minimum ninety (90) days

**Individuals guilty of further use or abuse of banned terms will be subject to more severe sanctions.**

If a match participant informs the referee of discriminatory abuse that the referee has not personally observed, they will follow the policy: ***NCYSA Dealing with Reported Incidents of Discriminatory Language or Actions***

The following is a list of banned terms that NCYSA has deemed unacceptable for use in any capacity before, during, or after any sanctioned coaching session, training, or match. Note that the following list is non-exhaustive, and it is the responsibility of all participants, coaches, and spectators to understand and refrain from any other discriminatory words or actions.

<b>Banned Terms (non-exhaustive)</b>			
B*tty Boy	Bean*r	Ch*nk	Cr*cker
F*g	F*ggot	H*mo	Mar*con
N*gro	N*gga	N*gger	P*ssy
P*to	Rag He*d	Sl*nt	Sp*c
That's so g*y	Wetb*ck	Jewb*y	That's r*tarded
Black Boy		White Boy	



## **Section 7 – Recruitment**

### **Recruitment:**

Any NCYSA club/team found guilty of illegally recruiting shall be fined \$5,000 per player illegally recruited.

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.

- a) An offer or promise of college scholarships, free uniforms, discounted team fees, guaranteed positions within the team, time of play, and/or negative statements about any member club which could affect the decision of a player regarding choice of teams.

### **Transfer & Recruitment Policy Violations**

Should a player be found guilty of breaching the Recruitment and / or Transfer Policy they will be immediately placed on suspension from all NCYSA participation and will not be released from the suspension until a release is provided from their previous Club.

- NCYSA Members do have the right to withhold a release due to monies owed based on their individual club policy.
- NCYSA is not responsible for collecting any fees or money owed to NCYSA member organizations and will not engage in any dispute between a member organization / club and any other entity or individual over fees or monies owed.
  - o Monetary Obligations to Member Organizations are non-appealable to NCYSA.

Upon receiving the release from their previous club, the player will serve the NCYSA Mid-Season Transfer Policy Suspension found in the [NCYSA Registration manual](#).

### **See NCYSA Registration Manual for Transfer Policy & Guidelines**

### **Disciplinary Proceedings for Violations**

A Coach found playing an illegal player in violation of the Recruitment and / or Transfer Policy will receive a formal notice of the allegations and is required to provide a statement to the NCYSA VP of Competitive. Additionally, the Club found to have a player illegally playing for any of their associated teams must submit a formal statement to the NCYSA VP of Competitive concerning the violation.

The NCYSA VP of Competitive reserves the right to act on the allegations based on the evidence and statements provided. Should the VP of Competitive choose to bring in additional executive board members to provide guidance on the matter they may do so at their sole discretion. The VP of Competitive also reserves the right to invoke an immediate hearing of the case under any department of NCYSA they choose, including an Executive Board Hearing.

Should the Club be found guilty of the violation the club / organization will be issued a \$5,000 fine for breach of this policy. Additional disciplinary action is at the discretion of the Discipline & Appeals Chairperson & / or the Executive Board.