

Revised AUGUST 2019



Established in 1975

NORTHERN ILLINOIS SOCCER LEAGUE 2019-2020 RULEBOOK

Northern Illinois Soccer League / NISL
545 S. Consumers Avenue, Palatine, Illinois 60074

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100. INTRODUCTION

- 101. League Name
- 102. Mission
- 103. Vision
- 104. Management of League
- 105. Affiliation
- 106. Office Information
- 107. Matters Not Provided For

200. CLUB & TEAM REGISTRATION

- 201. Club/Organization Eligibility
- 202. Field Requirements for Hosting Games
 - 202a.1 - Location Protests
- 203. Staff Requirements
- 204. Good Standing
- 205. Playing Seasons
- 206. League Structure
 - 206a. Description of Leagues/Divisions
 - 206a.1 - Premiership League/Division
 - 206a.2 - Championship League/Division
 - 206a.3 - Club & Conference League/Division
 - 206b. League Schedule
 - 206b.1 - Home Team Requests/Geographical Considerations
 - 206b.2 - Failure to Comply
 - 206c. Schedule Changes
 - 206d. League Standings
 - 206d.1 - Point System
 - 206d.2 - Awards
 - 206d.3 - Reporting Scores
- 207. Application Deadlines
- 208. New Club Application & Online Registration
 - 208a. New Clubs/Teams/Organizations
 - 208b. Returning/Existing Clubs/Teams/Organizations
 - 208c. Player Passes for Accepted Teams
- 209. Team Entry
 - 209a. Regulations
 - 209a.1 - Playing Up & Age Cut-Off (Tweeners Rule)
 - 209a.2 - Participation in Other Leagues & Tournaments
 - 209a.3 - Discipline and Fines
 - 209a.4 - Team Tryouts
- 210. Player Recruiting
- 211. Distribution of Promotional Material
- 212. Modification to Team Information
- 213. Final Authority
- 214. Referee Responsibilities
- 215. Fees & Other Expenses
- 215. Return of Fees/Reimbursement

300. PLAYER REGISTRATION & REGULATIONS

- 301. Player Eligibility
- 302. Good Standing
- 303. Player Regulations
 - 303a. Equipment Regulations
 - 303b. Medical Information
 - 303c. Player Release
 - 303d. Regulations/Discipline
 - 303e. Senior Amateur Information
- 304. Application Deadlines
- 305. Player Registration
 - 305a. Player Contracts/Agreements
 - 305b. Player Registration/Proof of Age
- 306. Acceptance of Players/Final Authority
- 307. Guest Players
- 308. Member Passes

400. COACHES' REGISTRATION & REGULATIONS

- 401. General Coaching Rules & Regulations
- 402. Certifications, Licensing, and Good Standing
- 403. Regulations
 - 403a. Coaching During a Game
 - 403b. Goal Safety
 - 403c. NISL Meetings
 - 403d. Dismissal/Discipline
 - 403d.1 - False Information
 - 403d.2 - Gross Misbehavior
 - 403d.3 - Removal of Teams Before Game End
 - 403d.4 - Dismissal
 - 403d.5 - Prohibitions
- 404. Coaches' Passes & Licensing

500. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

- 501. League Regulations
 - 501a. Scoring Method
 - 501b. Game Day Delays, Postponements, and Rescheduling
 - 501b.1 - Grace Period
 - 501b.2 - Authority to Delay or Postpone a Game
 - 501b.3 - Postponing a Game Prior to Start
 - 501b.4 - Grace Period Before Abandoning a Game
 - 501b.5 - Game Cancellation Criteria
 - 501b.6 - Incomplete Game/Standings
 - 501b.7 - Rescheduling a Postponed Game
 - 501b.8 - Rescheduling Considerations
 - 501c. No Show/Forfeit
 - 501c.1 - NISL Notification
 - 501c.2 - Penalties
 - 501d. Non-Performance by the Home Team
 - 501e. Non-Performance by Both Teams
- 502. Player Passes/Rosters/Game Cards
 - 502a. Tardy Players
- 503. The Technical Area
 - 503a. Dimensions and Placement
 - 503b. Allowable Staff
 - 503c. Regulations
- 504. Tiebreakers
- 505. Uniforms - Color Conflict
- 506. Inclement Weather
 - 506a. Lighting
 - 506a.1 - Recognizing the Threat
 - 506a.2 - Seeking Proper Shelter
 - 506b. Game Cancellation and Scoring
- 507. Concussion Initiative
 - 507a. Deliberate Heading the Ball
- 508. Goal Safety
- 509. Equipment Regulations
 - 509a. - Shin Guards
 - 509b. - Goalkeepers
 - 509c. - Color Conflict
 - 509d. - Dangerous Equipment
 - 509e. - Failure to Comply
- 510. Player Movement
 - 510a. - Player Transfers
 - 510b. - Player Movement Within Their Own Club

YOUTH SOCCER PLAYING NUMBERS & SIZES CHART

600. NISL 2017-2018 RULES OF PLAY

- 2011 & 2010 (07U & 08U Groups)
- 2009 & 2008 (09U & 10U Groups)
- 2007, 2006 & 2005 (11U & 12U Groups)
- 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999 & 1998 (13U & above Groups)
 - Ball Sizes
 - Substitutions
 - Offside
 - Kicks
 - Penalty Kicks
 - Red Cards
 - Matters Not Provided For

Field Layout Level 1
Field Layout Level 2
Field Layout Level 3
Field Layout Level 4

700. SMALL-SIDED GAMES

- 701. Deliberate Heading the Ball
- 702. Build Out Line
 - 702a. - No Punting
 - 702b. - Offsides
 - 702a. - Markings
- 703. Referee

800. PRESEASON TOURNAMENT

- 801. General Procedures
 - 801a. Team Points/Placement
- 802. Regulations
 - 702a. Officials
 - 702b. Rosters & Passes
 - 702c. Game Balls
 - 702d. Home/Away Team Procedure
 - 702e. Game Times/Schedule
 - 702f. Prohibitions & Protests
 - 702g. Referee Regulations
 - 702h. Tiebreakers
- 803. Seeding Meeting

900. SINGLE ELIMINATION TOURNAMENT

- 901. Tournament Format
 - 901a. Single Elimination
 - 901a.1 - Game Locations
 - 901b.2 - Team Points/Placement
- 902. Regulations
 - 902a. Officials
 - 902b. Rosters & Passes
 - 902c. Playing Numbers
 - 902d. Game Balls
 - 902e. Home/Away Team Procedure
 - 902f. Game Times
 - 902g. Prohibitions & Protests
 - 902h. Game Locations
 - 902i. Team Points/Placement

1000. PREMIER LEAGUE

- 1001. Official Game Card
- 1002. Coaching During The Game
- 1003. Premier Game Information
- 1004. Substitution
- 1005. Premier Cup

1100. REFEREES AND ASSIGNORS

- 1101. Responsibility of Assigning Referees
 - 1101a. Team Responsibilities/Referee Assigning
 - 1101b. Failure to Reach Agreement
- 1102. General Procedures for Game Officials/Referees
 - 1102a. Minimum Number of Referees
 - 1102b. Small Sided Games
 - 1102c. Loss of Time
 - 1102d. Procedures of Play
 - 1102e. Allocation of Power
 - 1102f. Game Conclusion

1200. FINES, DISCIPLINE & CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1201. Player Fines
- 1202. Coaching Fines
- 1203. Parent & Spectator Fines
- 1204. Substance Prohibitions for Spectators
- 1205. Illinois State Law

1300. PROTESTS & APPEALS

- 1301. Disciplinary Powers
 - 1301a. Disciplinary Hearing/Committee
- 1302. Requirements
 - 1102a. Types of Protests
- 1303. Procedures
 - 1103a. Due Process
 - 1103b. Restrictions

1400. CODE OF ETHICS AND GUIDELINES

- 1401. Section 1 - Definitions
- 1402. Section 2 - Basic Rules
- 1403. Section 3 - Clubs
- 1404. Section 4 - Code of Ethics
 - Responsibilities to Players
 - Responsibilities to NISL and Member Associations
 - Responsibilities to Referees
 - Responsibilities to Regarding Scouting and Recruiting
 - Responsibilities to Regarding Public Relations
 - Other Responsibilities
- 1405. Section 5 - Referee Code of Ethics
- 1406. Section 6 - Procedure for Filing and Appealing a PAD Report
- 1407. Section 7 - Penalties for Violations

1500. YOUTH CLUB STANDARDS

- 1501. Minimum Requirements To Qualify As A Club
- 1502. Training And Development
- 1503. Structural / Administrative Standards
- 1504. Facility Standards



Established in 1975

100. INTRODUCTION

101. League Name

The name of the league shall be the Northern Illinois Soccer League (NISL).

102. Mission

Our mission is that all soccer related decisions should be made with the player in mind. We are interested in the development of youth soccer, not the politics. Our office staff consists of players and coaches that believe in creating and maintaining a league that is focused on the development of the players at various levels and providing a competitive and equal playing field. We believe the NISL should be governed by simple administrative procedures which provide players, teams and clubs flexibility in the player development process. The NISL will create, develop, and foster the growth of club and community soccer programs throughout the Chicago Metropolitan Area and surrounding states.

103. Vision

NISL will provide a fun, safe and supportive environment, which nurtures and guides children to develop their talents, knowledge and appreciation for the game of soccer.

NISL will provide an equal opportunity to all soccer players, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators and officials to participate in youth soccer competitions.

NISL will provide an equal opportunity to all soccer players to participate in a competitive soccer environment that encourages good sportsmanship, principles of fair play, and the building of good character.

NISL will provide leagues and divisions so all soccer players, etc. can reach their highest level of competition.

104. Management of League

The NISL is owned and operated by Northern Independent Soccer League. Participation in the NISL is governed by the rules adopted by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the United States Soccer Federation (US Soccer), except where modified below. All competition in leagues/divisions affiliated with the NISL is governed by regulations approved by the NISL and the league office.

105. Affiliation

The NISL is a member of US Soccer and affiliate of US Club Soccer and USSSA.

106. Office Information

Office Address:	545 S. Consumers Avenue, Palatine, Illinois 60074
Telephone:	(847) 398-4545
Office Hours:	9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Friday
Website:	www.nisl.info & www.northernillinoisoccerleague.com

107. Matters Not Provided For

The NISL Administration Office shall have the final authority in all matters not specifically provided for by these rules and policies.

200. CLUB & TEAM REGISTRATION

201. Club/Organization Eligibility

Any soccer club/organization with teams may request entry to the NISL. All team and club registration shall be in accordance with the current US Soccer regulations unless otherwise specified. Any club or team that desires membership must register through the leagues online application form on the NISL website before the entry deadline. New club/organization applications will be reviewed by the NISL to determine if they meet the leagues minimum standards .

202. Field Requirements for Hosting Games

When clubs and teams register to play in the NISL, they must have the correct size field and goals for each age group designated by the NISL rules.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (1) One to (3) three teams per level | (1) One field recommended |
| (4) Four to (6) six teams per level | (2) Two fields recommended |
| (7) Seven to (9) nine teams per level | (3) Three fields recommended |
| (10) Ten or more teams per level | (4) Four fields recommended |

The location of the fields must be entered into the Club/Teams' online registration system. All goals must have nets and the field properly marked with corner flags and a minimum height of (5) five feet. Goals must be secured as per FIFA goal safety rules and inspected before each game by coaches and officials. Please review NISL Rules of Play for correct field and goal sizes.

202a.1 Location Protests

Any protest relating to the grounds, goal posts, bars and other appurtenances of the game shall be entertained only if an objection has been made with the referee and the other team prior to the start of the game. The game will be played under protest and the NISL league office will review each situation at a later date.

203. Staff Requirements

All teams must have a designated head coach, a maximum of two assistant coaches, and a team manager (operations). They will collectively be held accountable for their team's, player's, parent's, and spectator's behavior.

204. Good Standing

All teams must be properly registered competitive teams that meet the requirements for participation and are in good standing with the NISL. Having no outstanding violations, fines and meet the minimum league standards.

205. Playing Seasons

The playing seasons run from August 1st to July 31st of the following year.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Fall Playing Season | August 1st - December 31st |
| Spring Playing Season | January 1st - July 31st |

206. League Structure

206a. Description of Leagues/Divisions

206a.1 Premiership League/Division

Premiership League is the highest level of club soccer for teams ages 12U through 19U. All games are scheduled to be played at a NISL designated location.

Premier 1 - Chicago - **National Premier League - CNPL**

Premier 2 - Chicago Premier League - **CPL**

206a.2 Championship League/Division

The 3rd level of club soccer for teams ages 13U through 19U. Games are scheduled for teams to play a home and away schedule

Premier 3 - Chicago Championship League - CCL

206a.3 Club & Conference League/Division

Competitive Youth League pertains to all youth competitive ages excluding the Premiership and Championship League/Divisions.

Club -	Platinum	Conference -	Red
	Gold		White
	Silver		Blue
	Bronze		Etc.

206b. League Schedule

The League schedule is the ultimate responsibility of the NISL office.

An Administrators & Coaches Meeting takes place prior to each playing season. A pre-season divisional scheduling and operations meeting are designed to help prepare teams for the season operationally and give the opportunity to share and receive ideas. These meetings are mandatory for each NISL team, and carry a \$150 fee for failing to attend.

206b.1 Home Team Requests/Geographical Considerations

Home game dates & times can be requested upon registration and will be filtered in to the initial schedule. Once the schedules are posted online, clubs must log in to the "collaborative scheduler" and make sure that their home game times and locations are updated to their specifications.

206b.2 Failure to Comply

Teams not meeting game schedule obligations and fail to play a scheduled game will be fined **\$200.00 plus a deduction of 3 points from their league standings for every offense**. The team could be withdrawn from future NISL league play and a **\$1,000.00** performance bond maybe charged to the club.

It is imperative that teams are fully aware of their team commitment for the upcoming season and are prepared to make all schedule changes.

206c. Schedule Changes

Changes to the schedule must be made through the collaborative scheduler online(which is the official league schedule), and have no penalty attached. Changes must be done with agreements from both home and away coaches. All changes must be updated in the collaborative scheduler **120 hours** (5 Days) prior to the originally scheduled time. Any changes submitted with less than 120 hours notice will result in a **\$60 fine** for the team requesting the change and are subject to the approval of the Home Team's Referee Assignor. If the Referee Assignor is unable to provide a referee due to the late rescheduling, the game will result in a forfeit for the team requesting the change and a **\$100.00 fine** will be issued to the offending team.

If the Home & Away coaches cannot come to an agreement on a game date & time, the two teams must submit at least 3 possible game dates & times in to the League office that are available at their field location and the NISL will determine the final game date & time. Whichever team fails to show for the final game time will forfeit the game and a **\$100.00 fine** will be issued.

Teams registered and playing in the NISL may enter as many outside tournaments as desired, but must complete their league schedule by the end of the season as designated on the NISL League Calendar.

206.d League Standings

205d.1 Point System

Points shall determine the standings of teams in the respective divisions.

(3) Three points for a win

(1) One point for a tie

(0) Zero points for a regular loss

205d.2 Awards

Player awards are available for the top team in each division, fall and spring seasons, and can be picked up from the league office after final standings have been determined and verified by the administration.

205d.3 Reporting Scores

Scores are recorded online and updated instantaneously. The scores can be entered online by the referee and must be done by both home or away team administrators. Scores not reported are considered a forfeit, and zero points will be awarded to both teams along with the appropriate fine.

207. Application Deadlines

Team registration for the soccer year is August 1st to July 31st of the following year. Please check the NISL Calendar for application deadlines.

208. New Club Application & Online Registration

Application to the NISL must be done online. Please see www.northernillinoisoccerleague.com and click on the "New Club's application Form" link. All information must be filled out in full to be considered a complete application by the deadline (See NISL Master Calendar).

208a. New Clubs/Teams/Organizations

For all new clubs/teams/organizations, a team representative must register with the NISL. Once the office has received the notice, a NISL staff member will contact you via phone or e-mail with further instructions and proper procedures. Full payment must be received before your application is fully accepted. The league will grant you access to the online system after fees are collected. (see League Fees link to calculate payment of your team's.) .

Birth certificates, passports and state id's are required to verify the date of birth of any new player to the NISL.

208b. Returning/Existing Clubs/Teams/Organizations

Existing clubs/teams/organizations must re-use their previous login name and password for access.

208c. Player Passes for Accepted Teams

NISL processes the player passes in accordance to your team's information through the registration system online.

209. Team Entry

Teams are permitted to have multiple teams at all age groups. 08U teams are required to participate in the NISL Pre-Season Festival held in August.

209a. Regulations

209a.1 Playing Up & Age Cut-Off (Tweeners Rule)

Teams must indicate at what age level they are playing. The NISL operates calendar-year age divisions from 07U through 19U. Team age division shall be comprised of players who are of the designated age by January 1st of the current season.

Teams are permitted to play up age divisions with the permission of the league office.

Teams designated in an age division are not permitted to play players above that age.

209a.2 Participation in Other Leagues & Tournaments

Teams are permitted to register and play in any competitive competition simultaneously during a playing season.

Teams are permitted to enter US Soccer-Sanctions tournaments during the playing seasons, but all league games must be completed by the NISL league deadline.

Teams or Clubs are permitted to play indoor soccer.

209a.3 Discipline and Fines

The NISL may suspend, fine, and terminate (or any combination thereof) the membership of any team or club registered with the NISL if it is determined that:

- 1) The conduct of the member is adverse to the best interest of the NISL and soccer
- 2) The member has not completed the requirements of membership

Clubs, Organizations, Teams, Coaches and Parents found guilty of falsifying player information or playing ineligible players shall forfeit all games in which such players participated, as well as fines and possible suspension for the NISL

209a.4 Team Tryouts

Any team, club or organization may hold open tryouts for the next playing year. That team, club or organization or club must notify the NISL office in writing of that tryout and provide details of participation along with a copy of any written material or publicly post tryouts.

210. Player Recruiting

All NISL rules pertaining to Recruiting shall be strictly observed by all Adult Members as well as all official and unofficial team representatives. Unofficial team representatives include all parents of Players.

It is inappropriate to Recruit Player(s) unless the Director of Coaching of the Player's current Club provides written permission in advance of the initial approach to the Player. If a Player or parent of a Player initiates contact with any Adult Member of another club expressing intent to move to that Adult Member's club, it is the responsibility of that Adult Member or the Adult Member's Director of Coaching to inform the Director of Coaching of the Player's current club.

Inviting a Player to guest play without first submitting the proper US Club Guest Player Form shall be considered Recruiting.

It is unethical for a Player to be recruited from any outside program including but not limited to PDP, MDL, ODP, High School or the US Soccer Training Center, either by a coach working for such program or any other Adult Member, Player, parent or Official present at said event.

It is unethical for Adult Members to attend Tryouts for other Clubs for the purpose of promotion or recruitment, unless invited by the Club conducting the Tryout in writing, or to have Players attend Tryouts at other Clubs to Recruit Players from the Club conducting the Tryout.

It is unethical for a Team or groups of Players to be Recruited from one Club to another Club by an Adult Member working in the Team's present Club, an Adult Member from another Club, or any Adult Member or representative from inside or outside the Club.

Failure to follow the NISL player recruiting guidelines could result in a fine up to a **\$1,000.00** and possible removal of the club or organization from the league.

210. Distribution of Promotional Material

Distribution of all types of promotional materials at any NISL sponsored event or game is strictly prohibited without written consent of the NISL. - Failure to do so will result in a fine up to **\$1,000.00** and possible removal of the club or organization from the league.

211. Modification to Team Information

Modification to team information must be in writing. The NISL office accepts no other form of communication.

212. Final Authority

The NISL shall have the final authority and right to refuse admittance of any Club and Organizations based upon the team's prior performance in the NISL. These factors include, but are not limited to: failure to play NISL matches as scheduled, ; failure to comply with NISL rules, and/or failure to pay assessed NISL fees or fines on time.

213. Referee Responsibilities

Club and Organizations are responsible for providing referees to the pool of officials within the NISL and assist their referee assignor in providing qualified individuals for assignments to the team's home games.

214. Fees & Other Expenses

All Club and Organizations team and league fees must be paid in full to complete their registration. Player and Coaches Fees must be paid in full when the passes are picked up.

These fees are non-refundable and Club and Organizations are responsible to have these fees paid.

There will be a 3% service fee added to all credit card transactions.

215. Return of Fees/Reimbursement

Any Club and Organizations not accepted into the NISL will have all fees returned in full.

300. PLAYER REGISTRATION & REGULATIONS

301. Player Eligibility

Any player registered with a club/team may request entry into the NISL. Their information must be entered through the NISL online registration system with the Club or Organization they will participate with.

302. Good Standing

All players must be properly registered, meet the requirements for participation and be in good standing with US Soccer. No players shall be in violation of any League Rule.

303. Player Regulations

303a. Equipment Regulations

Players are required to wear shin guards during all NISL practices, games and or events. Players not wearing shin guards will not be permitted to participate.

Players are required to wear athletic glasses. Normal glasses are considered dangerous equipment. Players are not allowed to wear baseball caps or other headwear with hard bills or protrusions. Also, headwear with soft, non-abrasive material which fits the contour of the head, may be worn if necessitated by an injury or other medical condition.

Players are required to wear uniforms which consist of a shirt, shorts, and socks, which must be identical to his/her team and not similar to the opposing team.

303b. Medical Information

Players must have completed a medical/liability waiver form on file for the club that he or she is affiliated with for the current playing year.

Players suffering from an open wound are required to leave the field to have the wound treated.

303c. Player Release

Players completing a player registration are bound to that team for the entire seasonal year and cannot have a release from his/her club until the transfer window or the end of the season. A request for a release must be submitted to the club stating the reason for the release. It is the parents responsibility to process the player transfer and the release to the NISL.

Players may be denied a release by the league office if the player is suspended by the team/club for team/club infractions, owes club fees and equipment. All players must have secured the necessary clearance from the player's former club before a release is processed.

In the case of a dispute between player and club or between clubs, the NISL office, upon receiving written evidence from the club or player, shall evaluate the evidence submitted. The NISL administrative office shall render a decision on the status of the player's registration.

Player Transfer Form

Once a player signs a clubs registration form, the player is bound to that specific Club for the duration of the Soccer Playing Year (August 1st - July 31st of the following year). If, at any time between December, January or February, a player requests to be released or transferred to another Club, they must complete and submit a Player Release & Transfer Form to the NISL Administrative Office.

The player must also submit a Release & Transfer Request Fee of **\$175.00** at that same time. (Cashier's Check or Cash)
Fall Deadline is August 1st - Spring Deadline is March 1st

When a player is released, his/her player pass shall be surrendered to the league office.

303d. Regulations/Discipline

Players found playing without being properly registered with the league will be suspended. Players providing false information to the league or using falsified documentation or ID's will be suspended.

Players are only permitted to register for one NISL club/team at a time. Players signing and registering for a NISL club/team while being a registered member of another club/team will be fined and or suspended.

All player registration expires at the end of the seasonal year (ie. July 31st).

Player registration prior to the next seasonal year is not valid until July 1st prior to the next seasonal year which begins August 1st. Players that register with a club prior to July 1st may change teams without penalty to the team they are joining. (Ex. Inter-club transfers providing this is done prior to July 15th).

Players receiving a red card must sit out the next league game (minimum suspension - see Penalties and Fines). Players arriving to the game after the second half has begun are not allowed to enter the game under any circumstances.

Players are not permitted to use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products.

All Players that have played in a full game, the NISL recommends that those players should rest a minimum of (1) one hour between when one game finishes to the start of the second game.

303e. Senior Amateur Information

A youth player who is required to sign a senior amateur form shall retain youth eligibility. A youth player will be permitted to play an unlimited number of senior amateur games without losing his/her eligibility

304. Application Deadlines

Player registration for the soccer year is August 1st to July 31st of the following year. Please check the NISL Calendar for application deadlines as they change every year.

305. Player Registration

305a. Player Contracts/Agreements

It is strongly recommended that some type of signed agreement be obtained by clubs from the parents of participating players that indicates their intention to join the club for the current playing year. If no such contract or agreement is used by the club, a downloadable NISL Registration Form is available on the NISL website that will need to be signed by the parents of the players and kept on file by the club in case of a registration dispute. Clubs that register a player online without signed permission from the parents will not be allowed to prevent the player from seeking to move to another club unless proof can be provided that fees are owed or the player has already participated in a league game for the club during the current season.

305b. Player Registration / Proof of Age

All players must be registered in to the NISL Online Registration System for the club they will be participating with for the current playing year. Proof of age must be provided for all new player registration. Birth Certificates, Passports and any Federal or State forms of Identification will be accepted. Any club or parent that submits a doctored proof of age with the intention of illegally participating at a different age group will face possible expulsion from the league.

306. Acceptance of Players/Final Authority

The NISL has the final authority to accept or deny any player entrance into the NISL.

307. Guest Players *(registered with another NISL club)*

No guest players from other Club/Organizations are allowed to play for another Club/Organization in NISL league play. Guest players traveling to a tournament can go only with written permission from their original Club/Organization or Director of Coaching. The players playing pass must be given to the guest club for the duration of the tournament and be returned to the original club immediately after.

Players are **NOT** permitted to attend a practice, tryout, game or tournament with any other Club/Organization without written permission from their original Club/Organization or Director of Coaching. Failure to do so could result in Club fines and or suspensions of players, coaches and administrators.

308. Member Passes

Players must register with the NISL and have an NISL-Approved pass to participate in competition. The pass must be produced upon request to the NISL or match officials (no exceptions).

Players must register with a team/club and their information must be put into the NISL Online Registration System to validate the pass.

Players are permitted to register with their club organization on other passes provided they are US-Sanctioned and does not violate other NISL registration rules.

400. COACHES' REGISTRATION & REGULATIONS

401. General Coaching Rules & Regulations

All Directors of Coaching, Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Trainers must register online with the NISL and have an NISL-approved pass to participate in NISL competition. Coaches must be able to produce the pass upon request by the NISL or a match official (no exceptions).

402. Certifications, Licensing, and Good Standing

Coaching certifications do not guarantee you to be a good coach. However, a good coach wants coaching certifications to make him/her a better coach.

All coaches must be properly registered, meet the requirements for participation, not under suspension and be in good standing with US Soccer.

403. Regulations

Coaches and trainers must present a professional appearance at all times. Coaches are also required to know the "Rules of the Game."

403a. Coaching During a Game

No coaching other than the conveying of tactical instruction is permitted during the game. Individuals designated as coaches are authorized to convey tactical instructions from the technical area. The head coach is responsible for the actions of all persons associated with the team. The head coach shall ensure that no such person violates the coaching restriction. Violations by any person including spectators associated with the team will be deemed the action of the head coach.

A maximum of three persons associated in an official capacity with the team is permitted in the Technical Area.

403b. Goal Safety

Coaches are responsible to ensure that all goals prior to any practice, tryout, or game are secured properly and will not tip over with minimum force. Failure to do so could result in being suspended from coaching.

403c. NISL Meetings

Coaches are required to attend all NISL coaching meetings.

403d. Dismissal/Discipline

403d.1 False Information

Coaches found playing players without being properly registered with the league will be suspended. Coaches found providing false information to the league will be suspended. Coaches found signing or producing falsified document or ID will be suspended from coaching in the NISL.

403d.2 Gross Misbehavior

The NISL may suspend, for a definite period, and/or impose a fine on any coach guilty of gross misbehavior in public including intoxication, drug use, fighting, quarreling, indecency, or other scandalous conduct whether on or off the playing field when such conduct is in the NISL opinion, prejudicial to the best interest of soccer or the league.

403d.3 Removal of Teams Before Game End

Coaches removing their team from the field during a game so as to end or delay the game without permission of the referee, shall be guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct and shall incur a red card whether or not issued by the referee. The penalty shall be the same as other red cards issued to coaches, plus an additional suspension and fine from the NISL.

403d.4 Dismissal

Coaches dismissed from a NISL game must sit out the next league game (minimum suspension, no exceptions).

Coaches being dismissed more than once during the playing year will be suspended for the balance of the season. Additional dismissals in subsequent years will result in suspension from coaching in the NISL.

403d.5 Prohibitions

Smoking, tobacco products, and alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the Technical Area.

Coaches are not permitted to allow players from another team or organization to practice, tryout, play a game or play in a tournament without the written consent of his/her coach or organization.

Coaches are prohibited from recruiting registered players from another club.

Permission to try out must be obtained before a player is allowed on the field.

404. Coaches' Passes & Licensing

All Coaches must register themselves through the NISL online registration system with their club and personally authorize a background check once every playing year. Club Administrators cannot perform this task for the coaches, the legal authorization for a background check must be completed by each individual coach.

Background checks require a Social Security #. If a coach does not have a Social Security #, he or she must contact the league office for instructions on running an alternate background check. Passes are assigned to a specific club or team. If he/she leaves a team or club, it is required to apply for a new Coach's Pass and must agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the NISL and the legitimate decisions that may be made.

All coaches must have a USSF Coaching License or equivalent. Please refer to the minimum coaching standards on the NISL website.

500. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

501. League Regulations

Except as provided herein, FIFA "Laws of the Game" shall apply to each and every league game played under the jurisdiction of the NISL.

501a. Scoring Method

Points shall determine the standings of teams in the respective divisions.

- (3) Three points for a win
- (1) One point for a tie
- (0) Zero points for a regular loss

501b. Game Day Delays, Postponements, and Rescheduling

501b.1 Grace Period

It is imperative that games start on time. It is the responsibility for team coaches to communicate if they are going to arrive late at a venue or if games are going to start later than the scheduled time. With that in mind, teams starting games **(30) thirty minutes** or later than designated start time will be fined (\$100.00) One Hundred dollars.

It is not the intention of the NISL to forfeit games through tardiness.

501b.2 Authority to Delay or Postpone a Game

A match may be delayed or postponed due to:

1. A lack readiness of one or both teams to begin or continue playing the game
2. Unfavorable weather and/or other adverse conditions beyond the control of the participating teams which would make the playing of the game impractical or dangerous for players, other participants, or spectators.

501b.3 Postponing a Game Prior to Start

A game may be called off or postponed no earlier than two hours prior to kick-off because of inclement of weather or situations considered "acts of God" unless agreed to by both teams and the league office.

Exception: In a case where a third party (Park District official or facility manager) close the fields, a game cancelled more than two hours before kick-off, as long as the league and both teams are notified by the managing authority.

501b.4 Grace Period Before Abandoning a Game

Unless both teams and the referee agree to an alternate plan, teams must wait **(30) thirty minutes** before abandoning a game that has been started. Given the difficulty and cost of rescheduling, every attempt should be made to play the game irrespective of the length of the delay.

501b.5 Game Cancellation Criteria

NISL game cancellation should occur only in the most serious circumstances. However, the personnel safety of the participants, personal and spectators shall always be the highest priority.

501b.6 Incomplete Game/Standings

If a game is delayed due to inclement weather or some other extenuating circumstance, and one half of the game has been completed, the game will be considered complete and the score will be rerecorded. If one half of the game is not completed, the game is to be rescheduled.

501b.7 Rescheduling a Postponed Game

Any postponed game must be rescheduled within seventy-two hours of the game and must be replayed no later than the last day of the regular season.

501b.8 Rescheduling Considerations

When both teams cannot agree on a re-schedule date, the NISL administrative office has the authority to review all the facts and determine whether the game should be re-scheduled, forfeited, or cancelled permanently and whether fines should be given. The integrity of the league shall be given considerable weight in the resolution of these matters. The NISL administrative office shall decide what action to take and its decision shall be final.

501c. No Show/Forfeit

A No Show occurs when a team willfully does not show up at a game and there has been no league-approved written agreement for a change of the scheduled game.

501c.1 NISL Notification

Any team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident, weather or an 'act of God' should immediately notify the opponent and the league office. Each situation will be reviewed by the league office, which shall render a decision, which shall be final.

501c.2 Penalties for No Shows are as follows:

1. If a team fails to meet game schedule obligation and fails to attend a match, a **\$200.00 for every game** will be given, and the possibility of withdrawal from the league will be investigated
2. A forfeit will result in a 3-0 win to the team not at fault

501d. Non-Performance by the Home Team

In the event that the visiting team is present and ready to play and the home team is unable to provide a field or fails to show at the scheduled field and time. (Penalties 501c.2)

501e. Non-Performance by Both Teams

In the event neither team is prepared to play at the scheduled field and time and the game is not played before the end of the season, the league office will decide the game to have been forfeited by both teams. (Penalties 501c.2)

502. Player Passes/Rosters/Game Cards

It is the responsibility of each team to print off **(2) TWO copies of the OFFICIAL GAME ROSTER** and bring to every NISL scheduled game. (1) One Copy will be handed to the referee and (1) One Copy will be given to the opposing teams coach prior to kick-off. All players and coaches should be listed on an NISL official game card.

Player passes **ARE NOT REQUIRED** at check-in if the players name and photo is included on the NISL Official Game Roster.

If the player's name and photo is NOT present on the game roster, the coach or administrator can write that registered player as a **"WRITE IN"** and present his or her current NISL player pass to the game official at that game. (Red Carded players cannot be written on the game roster)

If a player's name is not on the game roster or does not have a player pass present at the NISL league game. The game may be played, but that game could be recorded as a forfeit and the club will receive a forfeit fine.

No guest players. All players must be registered with ONE (1) NISL Club and appear on an official NISL game roster.

Uniform Numbers must match the player's name on the NISL game card.

Any NISL registered player from your NISL Club/Organization is allowed to play on the age appropriate team providing he is in good standing and not under suspension.

502a. Tardy Players

All players showing up after the original game check in will be considered tardy. Tardy players must report to the referee confirming that he/she is on the current game roster or has his/her player pass when entering the game of play. Tardy Players that arrive **after halftime** are not allowed to participate or play in that NISL scheduled game.

503. The Technical Area

503a. Dimensions and Placement

The Technical Area shall be provided so that there are two separate areas that do not overlap, and in no case will they be closer than twenty-five (25) yards from the goal line. The Technical Area extends one yard on either side of the designated seated area and extends forward up to a distance of one yard from the touchline. The Technical Areas for each team shall be located on the same side of the field.

503c. Allowable Staff

No more than three (3) registered coaches and the roster player maximum number allowed in the Technical Area. There shall be no encroachment of the Technical Area by coaches or players from the opposite team.

The occupants of the Technical Area are identified before the beginning of the match and must be present on the Official Game Roster with a photo or have NISL approved passes

503d. Regulations

Only one person at a time is authorized to convey tactical instructions, and must return to their position after giving such instructions.

The coach and other officials must remain within the confines of the technical area except in special circumstances (i.e. entering the field of play with referee's permission to assess and injured player).

The coach, players, and other occupants of the Technical Area must behave in a responsible manner. Smoking of any tobacco-related product and the consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted.

504. Tiebreakers

Standings with regard to a game tie will be determined by:

Points - Head to Head - Goals Against - Goals For - Coin Toss.

505. Uniforms - Color Conflict

In the event of a color conflict with regard to uniforms, the away team is responsible for changing their jerseys.

506. Inclement Weather

The safety of the players, coaches, management and spectators are of primary concern during any weather event that occurs during a match. The referee has final say over delaying a game or canceling due to weather.

- 1) If a severe weather watch is in effect for game time, it is suggested that the home team have a battery operated programmer.
- 2) When lightning is sighted within (10) ten miles of the venue, determine movement and status and begin making preparations for a potential delay in the game.
- 3) When lightning is sighted within (6) six miles of the venue, stop the game immediately and clear the field and stands regardless of time played in the match.
Wait at least **(30) thirty minutes after the last lightning strike to resume play.**
Agreement must be reached between teams and referee whether the game is to be abandoned.
- 4) Be sure to all players, coaches, and spectators to their vehicles - nobody shall be on or near the fields or lights.

506a. Lighting

506a.1 Recognizing the Threat

- 1) Apply the 30-30 rule. When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds or less, seek proper shelter. Wait at least 30 minutes or more after hearing the last sound of thunder before leaving shelter.
- 2) Obey the rules established by the community park lightning detection and warning systems.
- 3) Remain calm to prevent panic by young players.

506a.2 Seeking Proper Shelter

- 1) No place outside is safe near thunderstorms
- 2) The best shelter is a large, fully enclosed, substantially constructed building. A vehicle with a solid metal roof and metal sides is a reasonable second choice.

506b. Game Cancellation and Scoring

If a game is delayed due to inclement weather or some other extenuating circumstance, and one half of the game has been completed, the game will be considered complete and the score will be rerecorded. If one half of the game is not completed, the game is to be rescheduled.

507. Concussion Initiative

If a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee is instructed to stop the play to allow for treatment and or evaluation as needed. If the player leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made at that moment. The player with the suspected head injury may not return to that game unless a health care professional or certified athletic trainer has cleared that player to participate.

The coach or the suspected player's parents cannot give clearance for that player to re-enter the game

507a. Deliberate Heading the Ball (Small Sided Games)

If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot where that player headed the ball. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred. (07U,08U,09U, 10U & 11U)

Heading is currently allowed in 12U games without limitations

508. Goal Safety

Coaches are responsible to ensure that all goals prior to any practice, tryout, or game are secured properly and will not tip over with minimum force. Failure to do so could result in being suspended from coaching.

509. Equipment Regulations

The basic compulsory equipment of a player is a jersey or shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards, and footwear. Each field player (per team) must have a different number on the back of his/her shirt.

509a. Shin Guards

Compulsory shin guards must be covered entirely by the socks. They must be made of a suitable material and sized to provide a reasonable degree of protection.

509b. Goalkeepers

Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from all field players, referees, and assistant referees.

509c. Color Conflict

When team colors are similar, as determined by the referee, the away team must change.

509d. Dangerous Equipment

Normal spectacles/glasses are considered dangerous equipment. Players are required to wear sport spectacles/glasses while playing. Baseball caps and other headwear with hard bills or protrusions are not allowed.

Modern protective equipment such as headgear, facemasks, knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded material are not considered dangerous and therefore are permitted.

509e. Failure to Comply

Players not wearing compulsory equipment will not be permitted to participate in a game until complying with the rules.

510. Player Movement

510a. Player Transfers

Players completing a player registration are bound to that team for the entire seasonal year unless he/she requests a release. A request for a release must be submitted to the club stating the reason for the release. The club then submits the release to the NISL.

Players may be denied a release by the league office if the player is suspended by the team/club for team/club infractions, owes club fees and equipment. All players must have secured the necessary clearance from the player's former club before a release is processed.

In the case of a dispute between player and club or between clubs, the NISL office, upon receiving written evidence from the club or player, shall evaluate the evidence submitted. The NISL administrative office shall render a decision on the status of the player's registration.

Player Transfer Form

Once a player signs a clubs registration form, the player is bound to that specific Club for the duration of the Soccer Playing Year (August 1st - July 31st of the following year). If, at any time between December, January or February, a player requests to be released or transferred to another Club, they must complete and submit a Player Release & Transfer Form to the NISL Administrative Office.

The player must also submit a Release & Transfer Request Fee of **\$175.00** at that same time. (Cashier's Check or Cash) Fall Deadline is August 1st - Spring Deadline is March 1st

When a player is released, his/her player pass shall be surrendered to the league office.

510b. Player Movement Within Their Own Club

Players with a US Club pass are allowed to play on any age-appropriate team within their own Club, or may be assigned to any team that is no more than two years older than the registered player unless otherwise allowed/directed by the League, up to available roster size per age.

For Clubs that have multiple teams within specific age groups, a player may move freely among those multiple teams. HOWEVER – moving players to play down within their own age group to win games is not the intent of this rule.

The player's development should always be at the forefront of any player movement within a Club.

Coaches who are playing players down must notify opposing coach before the scheduled game "who" the players are and the "reason" for them to be playing at that level/division. Clubs violating the NISL player movement rule could have games forfeited as well as receiving a fine.

The NISL recommends that players that are playing in the NISL Premier League level team should not play those players any lower than the NISL Platinum level

YOUTH SOCCER PLAYING NUMBERS & SIZES

600. NISL 2019-2020 RULES OF PLAY

2013 & 2012 (AGES 7 & 8)

Playing Numbers:	4 vs 4	
Playing Time:	4 x 10-minute quarters	
Game Roster Size:	Maximum of 8 players	Minimum of 4 players
Field Size:	25-35 yards long x 15-25 yards wide	
Goal Size:	4 feet high x 6 feet wide	
Penalty Area:	none	
Player Distance from Ball:	10 feet	

2013 & 2012 (AGES 7 & 8)

Playing Numbers:	5 vs 5	
Playing Time:	2 x 25-minute halves	
Game Roster Size:	Maximum of 10 players	Minimum of 5 players
Field Size:	30-40 yards long x 25-35 yards wide	
Goal Size:	4.5 feet high x 9 feet wide	
Penalty Area:	6 yards	
Player Distance from Ball:	4 yards	

2011 & 2010 (AGES 9 & 10)

Playing Numbers:	7 vs 7	
Playing Time:	2 x 30-minute halves	
Game Roster Size:	Maximum of 14 players	Minimum of 7 players
Field Size:	50-60 yards long x 35-45 yards wide	
Goal Size:	6.5 feet high x 12 feet wide	
Penalty Area:	10 yards	
Player Distance from Ball:	6 yards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build Out Lines should be an equal distance between the top of the penalty area line and halfway line• The build out line will also be used to denote where an offside can be called. Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line. Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and the opposing teams goal line.		

2009 & 2008 (AGES 11, & 12)

Playing Numbers:	9 vs 9	
Playing Time:	2 x 35-minute halves	
Game Roster Size:	Maximum of 16 players	Minimum of 9 players
Field Size:	70-80 yards long x 45-55 yards wide	
Goal Size:	6.5 feet high x 18 feet wide (7 feet x 21 feet is acceptable)	
Penalty Area:	14 yards	
Player Distance from the Ball:	8 yards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliberate heading is not allowed in 11U games. Heading is currently allowed in 12U games.		

2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, & 2001 (AGES 13 & ABOVE)

Playing Numbers:	11 vs 11
Playing Time:	2 x 40-minute halves (13, 14, 15, & 16) 2 x 45-minute halves (17, 18, & 19)
Game Roster Size:	Maximum of 18 players Minimum of 11 players
Field Size:	100-120 yards long x 60-70 yards wide
Goal Size:	8 feet high x 24 feet wide
Penalty Area:	18 yards
Player Distance from Ball:	10 yards

Ball Sizes

Ball sizes will not follow the direct level of the charts. They will be secured as follows:

Size 3: 07U & 08U

Size 4: 09U, 10U, 11U, & 12U

Size 5: 13U & above

Substitutions

07U through 12U (9v9) Age Group

In all games played in the NISL 07U through 11U age group, substitution will be allowed as follows:

1. Substitution shall be limited to a maximum of three players per substitution.
2. Players who have been substituted for may re-enter the game.
3. 10U Leagues and below for exuberant players, the referee should escort the player to the bench for a 5 minute time out penalty. This player may be substituted.
4. 11U & 12U. Substitution is not allowed for players ejected from the game.
5. Substitution can be made without the consent of the referee under the following circumstances:
 - A. The player being substituted for must have left the field of play at the touchline directly in front of his team's technical area.
 - B. Each player must identify whom he or she is substituting for. (High five, hand shake, or Bib exchange)

Failure to follow the above procedures could result in referee awarding a five-minute penalty against the offending team. (Play short)

Technical area is the area directly in front of the team's bench.

12U through 19U Premiership & Championship Age Group

In all games played in the NISL 12U through 19U age group substitution will be allowed as follows:

1. Substitution shall be unlimited.
2. Players who have been substituted for may re-enter the game.
3. Substitution is not allowed for players ejected from the game.
4. Substitution can be made with the consent of the referee at the following times:
 - A. Prior to a throw in by the team who has possession
 - B. Prior to a goal kick by either team
 - C. After a goal by either team
 - D. After an injury on either team- when referee stops the play
 - E. After a caution by offending team- when referee stops the play
 - F. At half-time

N.B. Substitution is not permitted prior to a corner kick by either team.

Offside

There are no offside for 07U and 08U.

Kicks

Every kick is direct at 07U & 08U age groups.

Penalty Kicks

There are no penalty kicks for 07U & 08U age groups. All kicks must be outside the area and must be direct.

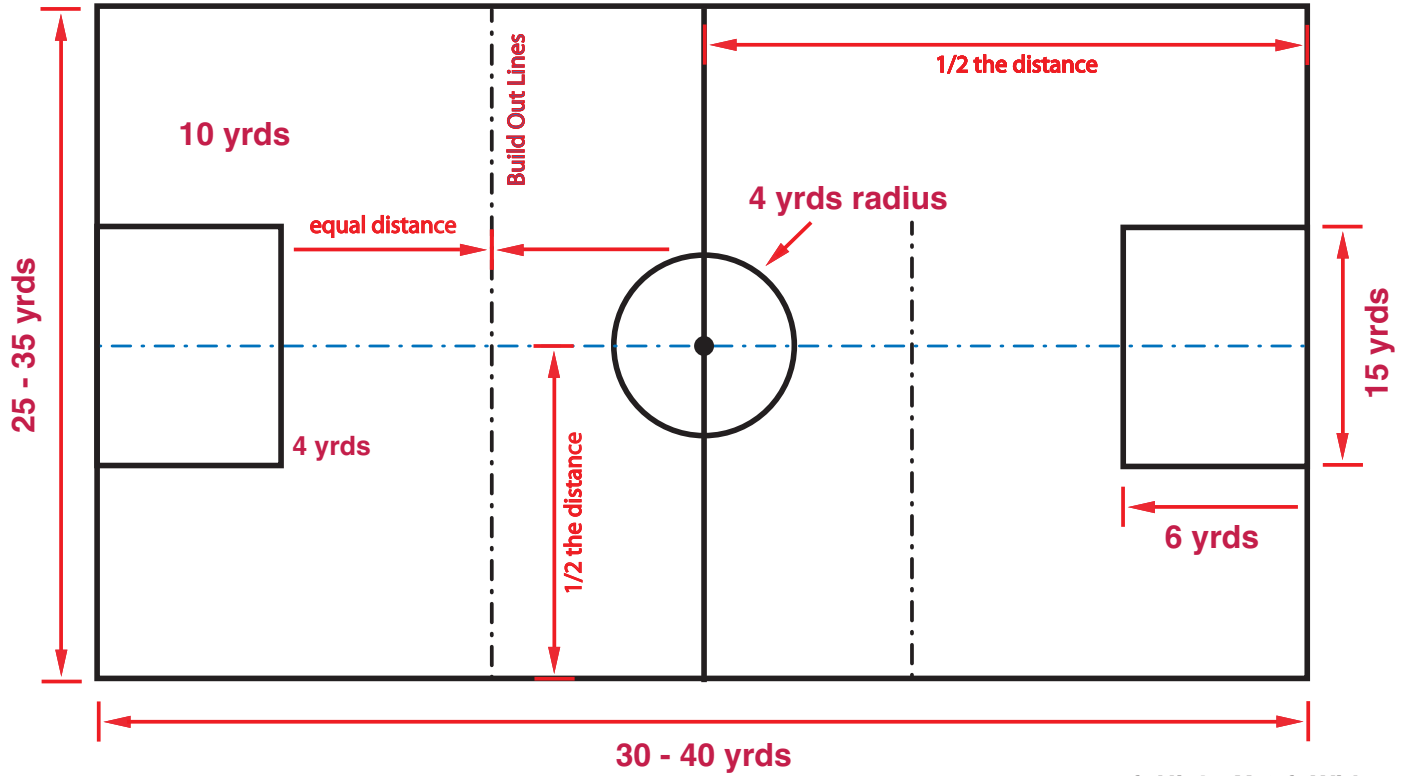
Red Cards

No red cards are used for 07U, 08U, 09U and 10U Leagues. There is, however, a time-out for exuberant players. 11U Leagues and above, players can be red carded and ejected from a game. (Before, During or After)

Matters Not Provided For

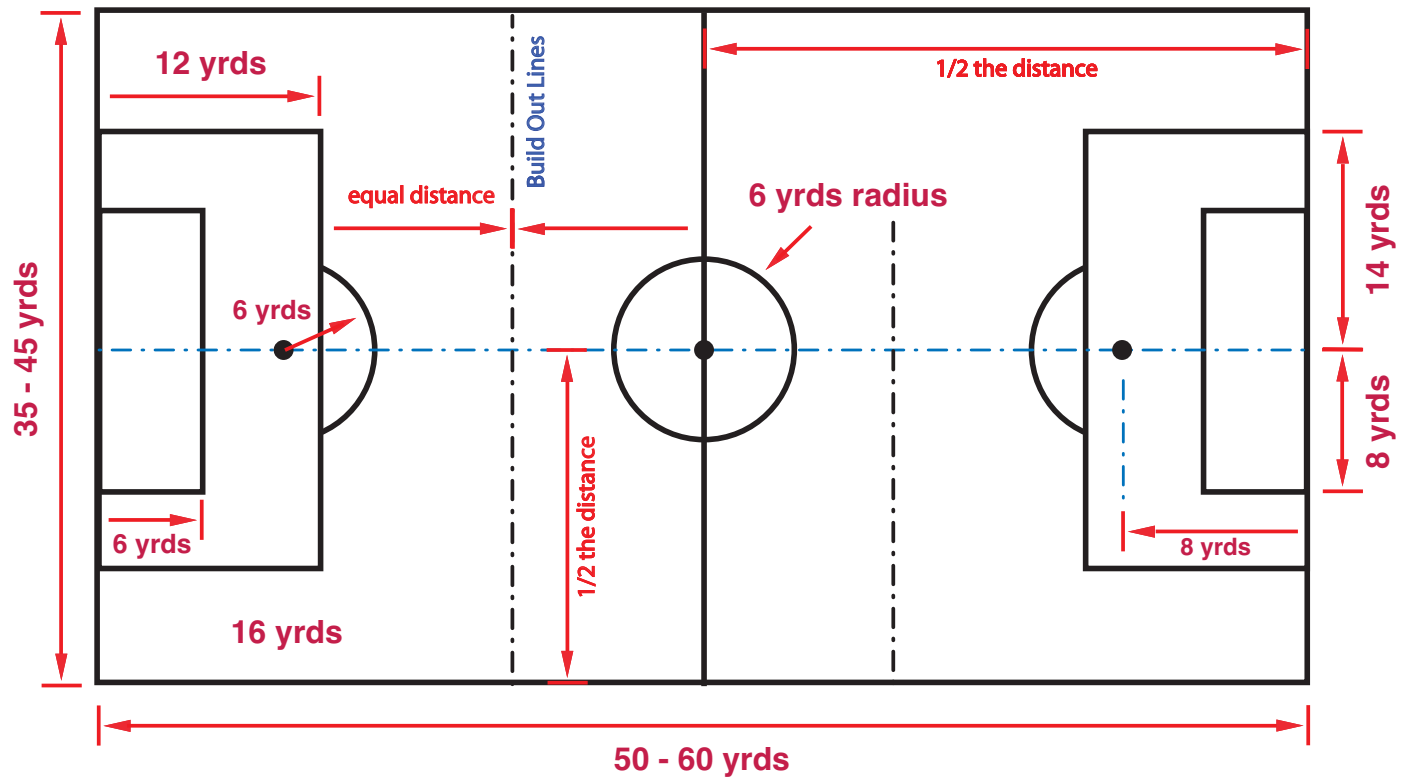
There are no throw-ins for Level 1. Kick-ins are permitted.

LEVEL 1



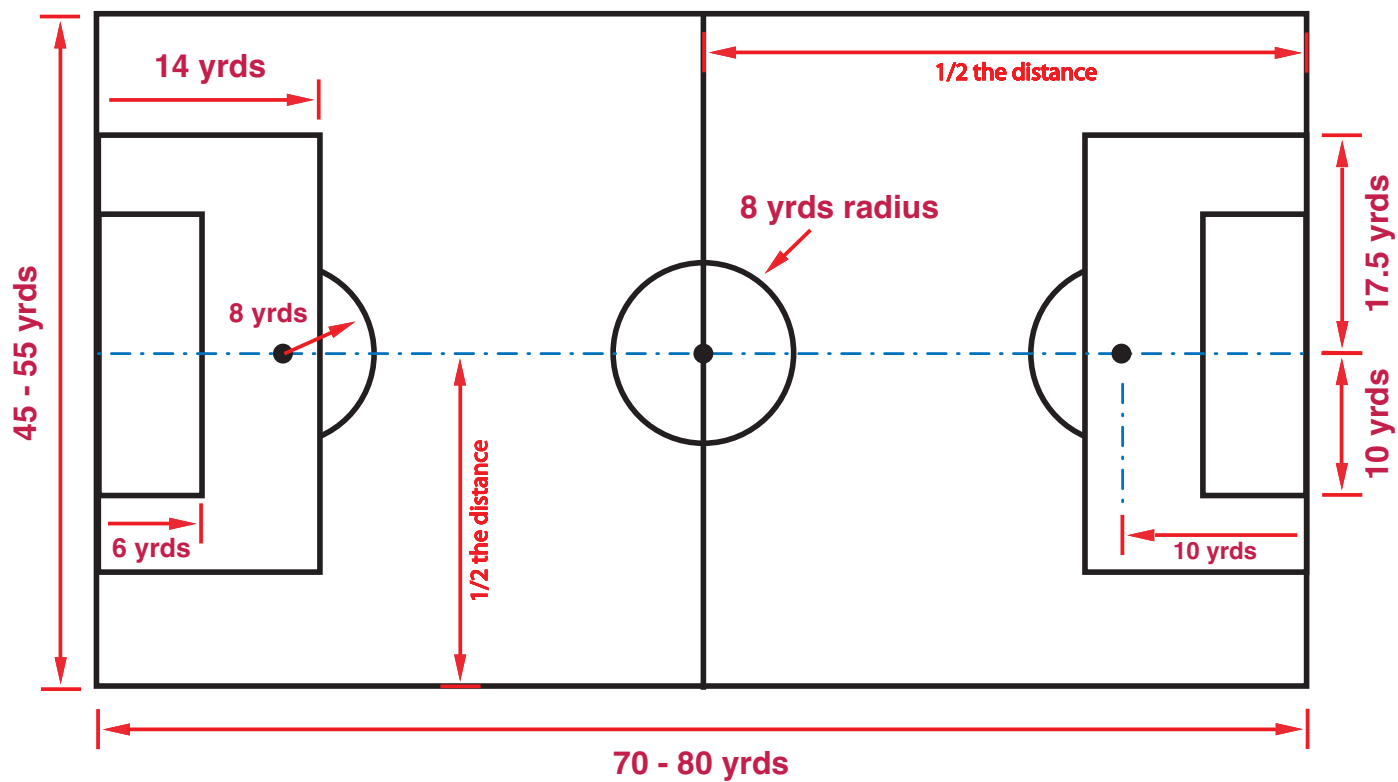
Goal Size - 4.5 ft High X 9 ft Wide

LEVEL 2



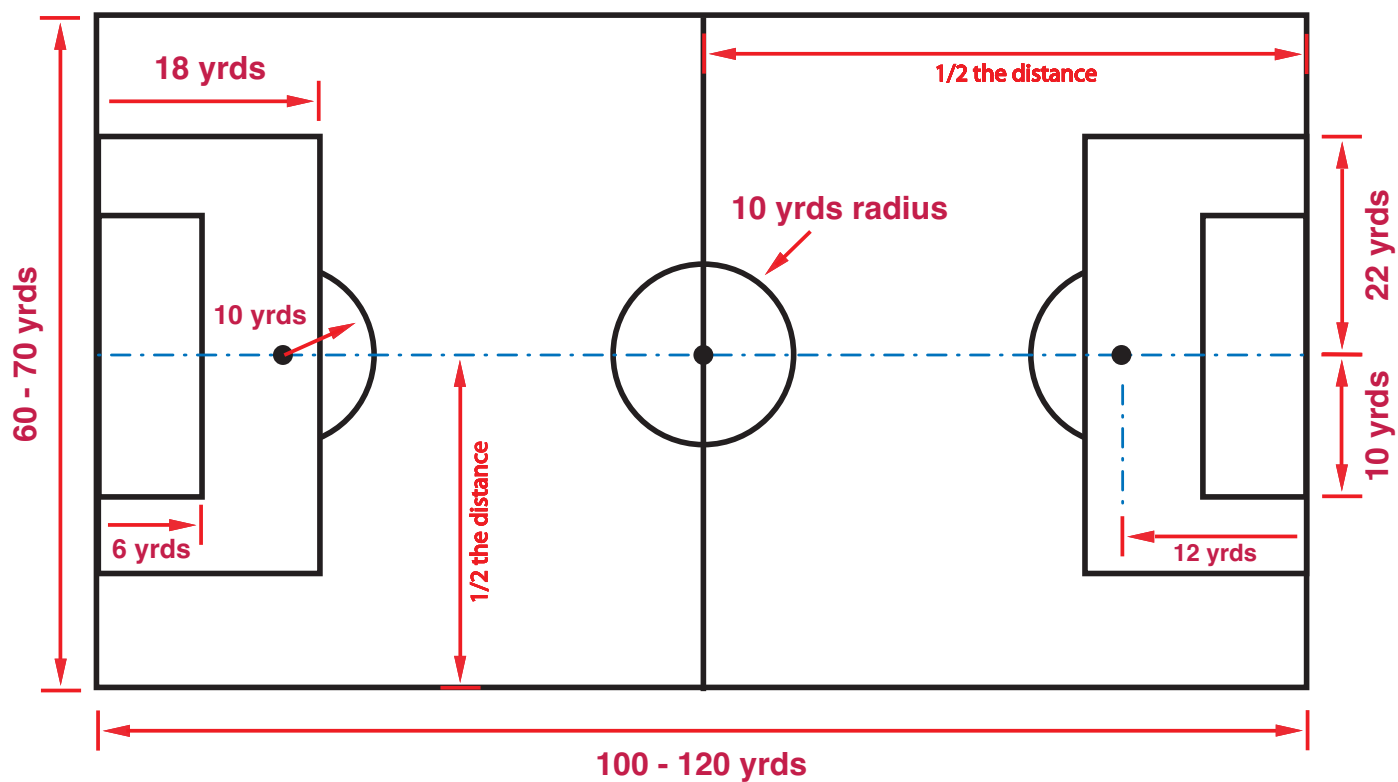
Goal Size - 6.5 ft High X 12 ft Wide

LEVEL 3



Goal Size - 6.5 ft High X 18 ft Wide

LEVEL 4



Goal Size - 8 ft High X 24 ft Wide

700. SMALL-SIDED GAMES

Small-Sided Games are games with fewer players competing on a smaller sized field. These are fun games that involve the players more because fewer players are sharing one ball. Lower playing numbers has a definite developmental impact on our younger soccer players. Any travel should be limited to no more than a hour away.

Benefits For Small-Sided Games:	More touches the soccer ball
	Less-complicated decisions making
	More physically efficient in the field space
	Individual teaching time
	Players more involved
	Opportunities to attack and defend

701. Deliberate Heading the Ball

If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot where that player headed the ball. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred. (07U,08U,09U,10U & 11U)

Heading is currently allowed in 12U games without limitations

702. Build Out Line

The build out line was developed to promote playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting. When a goalkeeper has the ball either during regular play (from the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play. After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play can resume as normal.

Build Out Lines should be an equal distance between the top of the penalty area line and halfway line

702a. No Punting or Drop Kicks

If a goalkeeper punts the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred. (07U,08U,09U & 10U)

Punting or Drop Kicks are currently allowed in 11U & 12U games without limitations

702b. Offsides

The build out line will also be used to denote where an offsides can be called. Players **cannot** be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line. Players **can** be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and the opposing teams goal line.

702c. Markings

Please check NISL Rulebook **Section 600.** for all field markings and the build out line layout.

703. Referee

Following US Soccer's playing initiatives and the NISL/US Club's attempt to alleviate the referee shortage. The NISL WILL NOT require Clubs/Teams to provide assistant referees and or linespeople for ALL small-sided games. (9v9, 7v7, 5v5, 4v4 = 12U and Below)

800. PRESEASON TOURNAMENT

The NISL will rank teams relative to others in a divisional league play on the basis team's record and ability. Each seasonal year, when teams apply for membership, information is required from the team's organization on their past record, current ability, and level of play.

In the 07U-08U age groups, the Preseason Tournament takes place at the beginning of the seasonal year where teams compete against each other and then are ranked by the NISL office. In the 09U-19U age groups, the NISL relies on the coaches and organizations information and teams record before the league office ranks and places teams in divisions based on ability.

801. General Procedures

The tournament dates and location are available from the NISL calendar of events. It is mandatory for teams to participate so that coaches can see their teams are prepared for the upcoming season.

After the teams have entered this competition, they are to be pre-seeded based upon last spring's performance and coaches recommendations.

801a. Team Points/Placement

On Day #1 (Saturday), all teams play three games within their group and are awarded points as follows:

- Win – Six (6) points
- Tie – Three (3) points
- Loss – Zero (0) points
- Forfeit Win – Two (2) points

(1) One bonus point is awarded per goal scored up to a maximum of three points - win, lose, or tie.

Based upon their final positions after play on Saturday, teams are then placed into groups for Sunday play.

On Day #2 (Sunday), all teams play three more games within their newly assigned group, and are awarded points mirroring Saturday.

*NOTE: No points are carried over from Saturday games.

802. Regulations

802a. Officials

All games will be refereed by (1) one USSF Licenced referee

802b. Rosters & Passes

The maximum number of players per team will be as follows:

08U 12 players

No player changes are allowed during the course of this tournament.

Player passes must be used for ALL games.

The starting lineup should be on the field and ready to start at the predetermined time listed on the schedule.

802c. Game Balls

Game balls will be provided by the home team listed on the schedule, subject to referee approval.

07U-08U

-

Size 3

802d. Home/Away Team Procedure

The first team listed is the home team, and will kick off. The Away team must change in case of color conflict, and will have the choice of the direction of play.

Both teams must check in with the Field Marshal at the assigned field 15 minutes prior to each game.

802e. Game Times/Schedule

Please refer to the schedule for game times. The NISL reserves the right to alter game times, shorten games, and even eliminate games due to inclement weather.

Teams are not allowed to warm-up on the field.

Games will be started on time. Any team over (10) Ten minutes late will forfeit 2-0.

Changes in placement, times, etc., may be made at the Tournament Director's discretion.

802f. Prohibitions & Protests

Red carded players will be disqualified for the next scheduled game.

Protests are allowed to ineligible players only.

802g. Referee Regulations

The referee will not stop play for substitutions -only for serious injury or wasting time. The referee will keep on time all matters relating to the game.

802h. Tiebreakers

Standings with regard to a game tie will be determined by:

Points - Head to Head - Goals Against - Goals For - Coin Toss.

803. Ranking Meeting

Coaches can give additional information at a Ranking Meeting which takes place prior to the divisions being finalized and a schedule set.

Teams are also allowed to discuss their position at the seeding meeting scheduled after the Preseason Tournament. Please refer to the NISL Calendar of Events for details.

Once a division is set and a schedule is made, no changes of teams within the divisions are allowed. The NISL has the ultimate responsibility for the setting of the League Divisions.

900. SINGLE ELIMINATION TOURNAMENT

The NISL Tournaments are restricted to US Club Soccer Clubs and League Members. However, if slots are available, members from other USSF-affiliated organizations may apply to participate. If accepted, any such non-members shall register that team, and receive player cards and tournament insurance from NISL / US Club Soccer. The Tournament Authority shall ensure that all US Club Soccer St teams play with their US Club Soccer Cards.

There are no minimum league games required to enter the Tournament.
Entry fees will be determined by the NISL League Office.

901. Tournament Format

901a. Single Elimination

All teams will be seeded into a Double Elimination format tournament bracket.

901a.1 Game Locations

For all matches before the Semi-Final and Final games, the Home Team will provide fields and contact their local assignor for providing referees. The NISL will pay the center referees – it is the Club's responsibility to pay the linespeople.

Semi-Final and Final games will be played at a neutral location set up by the league office with NISL-certified referees.

901a.2 Team Points/Placement

In the result of a tie during the Single Elimination Round, the teams will immediately begin PKs. If neither team is a winner after the initial five (5) PKs, the teams proceed to a sudden death PK.

902. Regulations

902a. Officials

Each Home Team must provide three referees per game who is knowledgeable on the "Laws of the Game" for each match. They must report to the field 15 minutes prior to the game. All matches must use referees certified by the U.S. Soccer Federation.

902b. Rosters & Passes

There are no restrictions on rosters. Players become "Cup-tied" to a team. A player may not play for different teams in different age divisions of the Cup. Players may move up at any time, but immediately become Cup-tied to that team for the tournament and cannot move to a lower age bracket.

Players shall have a US Club Player Pass to participate in the Tournament. Player passes must be used for all games.

No guest players from another Club are permitted.

The maximum number of players per team will maintain standard NISL regulation.

902c. Playing Numbers

Playing numbers will proceed as follows:

09U-10U	-	7v7
11U-12U	-	9v9
13U-18U	-	11v11

902d. Game Balls

Game balls will be provided by the home team listed on the schedule, subject to referee approval. Sizing will maintain standard NISL Regulation.

902e. Home/Away Team Procedure

The first team listed is the home team, and will kick off. The Away Team must change in case of color conflict and will have the choice of the direction of play.

902f. Game Times

Games will be started on time. Any team over **(30) thirty minutes** late will forfeit.

902g. Prohibitions & Protests

Red-carded players will be disqualified for the next scheduled game.
Protests are only allowed to ineligible players only.

902h. Game Locations

The designated Home Team will provide fields and contact their local assignor for providing referees. The NISL will pay the center referees – it is the Club's responsibility to pay the linespeople.

902i. Team Points/Placement

The first round will consist of the following points:

- Win – Six (6) points
- Tie – Three (3) points
- Loss – Zero (0) points
- Forfeit Win – Two (2) points

- (1) One bonus point is awarded per goal scored up to a maximum of three (3) points - win, lose, or tie.

Based upon these results, the winner of each bracket within each age group will advance to the next round.

Standings with regard to a tie at the end of the first round will be determined by, and in order of:

- (1) Points
- (2) Head to Head
- (3) Goals Against
- (4) Goals For
- (5) Coin Toss

1000. PREMIER LEAGUE

1001. Official Game Card

It is the responsibility of each team to print off **(2) TWO copies of the OFFICIAL GAME ROSTER** and bring to every NISL scheduled game. (1) One Copy will be handed to the referee and (1) One Copy will be given to the opposing teams coach prior to kick-off. All players and coaches should be listed on an NISL official game card.

Player passes **ARE NOT REQUIRED** at check-in if the players name and photo is included on the NISL Official Game Roster.

If the players name and photo is NOT present on the game roster, the coach or administrator can write that registered player as a **"WRITE IN"** and present his or her current NISL player pass to the game official at that game. (Red Carded players cannot be written on the game roster)

If a players' name is not on the game roster or does not have a player pass present at the NISL league game. The game may be played, but that game could be recorded as a forfeit and the club will receive a forfeit fine.

No guest players. All players must be registered with ONE (1) NISL Club and NISL League and appear on an official NISL game roster.

Uniform Numbers must match the player's name on the NISL game card.

Any NISL registered player from your NISL Club/Organization is allowed to play on the age appropriate team providing he is in good standing and not under suspension.

11v11 Rosters are limited to a maximum of 18 players and will need at least 7 players to start the game

1002. Coaching During The Game (RULE 403a.)

No coaching other than the conveying of tactical instruction is permitted during the game.

The head coach is responsible for the actions of all persons associated with the team. The head coach shall ensure that no such person violates the coaching restriction. Violations by any person including spectators associated with the team will be deemed the action of the head coach.

The Technical Area extends one yard on either side of the designated seated area and extends forward up to a distance of one yard from the touchline.

A maximum of 3 Coaches/Managers Must have (US Club/NISL passes) are permitted in the technical area/team side of the field.

Only 1 person at a time is authorized to stand and convey tactical instructions, and must return to their position after giving such instructions. The coach and other officials must remain within the confines of the technical area except in special circumstances

1003. Premier Game Information

There is no rescheduling of games by teams. Games will only be rescheduled due to weather or ground conditions and will be determined by the NISL. Teams that forfeit a game, the club will be **fined \$400**, 3 points will be awarded the other team, and the game will not be rescheduled.

GAMES TIMES: 12U thru 18U = 2 x 40 minutes

All games are scheduled to begin on time. NO coin toss. The home team is listed first on the schedule and will determine direction. The visiting team is listed second on the schedule and will kick off. Games are a running clock with the halves will finish on time. If there is a significant stoppage time (injury or force of nature) time can be added to the game.

There is no warm-up on the field. The starting line-up is to be ready by game time

In the event of a color conflict the **AWAY** team will be responsible for changing.

LEAGUE STANDINGS = 3 points for **WIN** = 1 points for **TIE** = 0 points for a **LOSS**

Teams not meeting game schedule obligations and fail to play a scheduled game will be fined **\$400.00 plus a deduction of 3 points from their league standings for every offense**. The team could be withdrawn from future NISL league play and a **\$1,000.00** performance bond maybe charged to the club.

Unless both teams and the referee agree to an alternate plan, teams must wait **(30) thirty minutes** before abandoning a game that has been started. Given the difficulty and cost of rescheduling, every attempt should be made to play the game irrespective of the length of the delay.

It is imperative that teams are fully aware of their team commitment for the upcoming season and are prepared to make all schedule changes at the schedule meeting.

In the event of teams are tied at the end of the regular season, the tie breaker will be:

Points - Head to Head - Goals Against - Goals For - Coin Toss

The TEAM CAPTAIN is the only person that can speak with the center referee BEFORE, DURING, or AFTER the game.

1004. Substitutions

Teams are permitted to have unlimited substitution

There is no substitution by the winning team in the last 5 minutes of the game.

If referee assesses that the winning team sustains an injury in the last five minutes the team's injured player can be replaced

If the losing team makes a substitution in the last 5 minutes the winning team can sub at the same moment.

1005. Premier Cup

Games are single elimination and if it ends in a tie the game will go directly to penalty kicks.

The team that wins the penalty kicks will be awarded a win.

1100. REFEREES AND ASSIGNORS

All games played under the jurisdiction of the NISL will be officiated by a currently-registered referee who is distinguished as such with the USSF.

1101. Responsibility of Assigning Referees

1101a. Team Responsibilities/Referee Assigning

It is the responsibility of the home team for securing a registered referee from the NISL assignor. If the home team cannot secure a registered referee twenty-four hours before the scheduled game time, they shall notify the visiting team and upon mutual agreement, a knowledgeable person acceptable to both teams can officiate the game.

1101b. Failure to Reach Agreement

If an agreement cannot be reached, the game shall be re-scheduled. If the home team does not secure a registered official and fails to notify the visiting team, the home team will be fined (\$150.00) fifty dollars for the first offense and (\$300.00) seventy-five dollars each subsequent offense. The game can be played under protest, be re-scheduled at the visiting team's location or the game can be designated a forfeit by the NISL.

1102. General Procedures for Game Officials/Referees

All referees and assistants must be registered with the NISL and in good standing with the USSF. All are required to be knowledgeable with the NISL Rule Modifications Procedures.

1102a. Minimum Number of Referees

FIFA law requires one referee and two assistants (linespersons) per game. Refereeing by any other system such as two referees and no assistants is not allowed under any circumstances in the NISL.

Soccer clubs/organizations are responsible to pay and assign the lines people for all home games. The Northern Illinois Soccer League is responsible for paying the center official. (Exception - Premiership 1 & 2)

1102b. Small Sided Games

Following US Soccer's playing initiatives and the NISL/US Club's attempt to alleviate the referee shortage. The NISL WILL NOT require Clubs/Teams to provide assistant referees and or linespeople for ALL small-sided games. (9v9, 7v7, 5v5, 4v4 = 12U and Below)

1102c. Loss of Time

The allowance for time lost through substitution(s), the assessment of injury to players, the removal of injured players from the field of play for treatment, wasting time, or any other cause is at the discretion of the referee and is to be made at the end of the period in which the time was lost.

1102d. Procedures of Play

At the start of play, referees are required to:

- 1) Preliminary check of the goals to ensure they are securely anchored
- 2) Toss a coin and the team that won the toss decides which goal it will attack in the 1st half of the game - the other team takes the kick-off
- 3) At half time, teams change ends and attack opposite goals

1102e. Allocation of Power

The referee shall have the power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in matches played in the NISL. The referee shall have power, during the game, to deal with players guilty of violent conduct or using threatening or abusive language. The referee will remain on the field of play and in charge during the league's traditional handshake.

1102f. Game Conclusion

In the event a referee becomes incapacitated during the game from any cause that would prevent him or her from continuing the game, the control of the game shall be turned over to a person mutually agreed upon by both team coaches who shall conduct the game to its conclusion. If one half of the game has been completed, the game will be considered complete.

1200. FINES, DISCIPLINE & CODE OF CONDUCT

1201. Player Fines

VIOLATION	PENALTY / FINE		
01. Player receiving a RED card	1st offense	\$ 100.00 fine	+ 1 Game suspension
	2nd offense	\$ 150.00 fine	+ 3 Game suspension
	3rd offense	\$ 300.00 fine	+ League suspension
02. Players receiving a RED card for violent offense	1st offense	\$ 150.00 fine	+ 2 Game suspension
	2nd offense	\$ 200.00 fine	+ 5 Game suspension
	3rd offense	\$ 400.00 fine	+ 1 Year suspension
03. Player - Referee ABUSE		\$ 400.00 fine	+ 1 Year suspension (Minimum suspension)
04. Player - Referee ASSAULT		\$ 600.00 fine	+ Suspension from playing in the NISL
05. Player providing inaccurate pass information, ex. birth certificate, name, picture		\$ 200.00 fine	+ Suspension from playing in the NISL
06. Player registering for two clubs simultaneously in NISL or registering for another NISL club.		\$ 200.00 fine	+ 1 Year Suspension
07. Player playing without being properly registered with the league.		\$ 200.00 fine	+ 1 Year Suspension
08. Player playing with dangerous equipment	Removed from game until referee in charge inspects or approves that the equipment has been rectified		
09. Player using profanity	1st offense	- Yellow Card	
	2nd offense	- Red Card	
10. Player making racial comments		\$ 100.00 fine	+ Possible Suspension
11. Players who tryout, practice or play in a game or a tournament without written consent from his/her registered team, coach or club		\$ 100.00 fine	+ Possible Suspension
12. Players illegally playing down and age group.		\$ 200.00 fine	+ 1 Year Suspension

1202. Coaching Fines

VIOLATION		PENALTY / FINE	
01.	Coach being dismissed from the game (Red Card does not have to be shown)	1st offense	\$ 300.00 fine + 1 game suspension
		2nd offense	\$ 500.00 fine + 3 game suspension
		3rd offense	\$ 800.00 fine + league suspension
02.	Coach - Referee ABUSE	\$ 500.00 fine	+ 1 year suspension (Minimum suspension)
03.	Coach - Referee ASSAULT	\$ 1,000.00 fine	+ Suspension from Coaching in the NISL
04.	Coach providing or imputing inaccurate pass information, ex. birth certificate, name, picture	\$ 400.00 fine	+ Suspension from Coaching + Forfeiture of Games
05.	Coach registering players who are registered for two clubs simultaneously in NISL or registering for another NISL club.	\$ 400.00 fine	+ Suspension from Coaching
06.	Coach illegally playing players down an age group	\$ 400.00 fine	+ 1 year Suspension
07.	Coach playing players without being properly registered with the league.	\$ 400.00 fine	+ 1 year Suspension
08.	Coach permitting players to practice, tryout, play in a game or tournament without written permission from his/her registered team, coach or club	\$ 200.00 fine	+ Possible Suspension
09.	Coach found signing or producing falsified documents or ID's	\$ 400.00 fine	+ 1 year Suspension
10.	Coach emailing or contacting NISL Registered Players, Illegal Recruitment, Tampering, Poaching	\$ 200.00 fine	+ Possible Suspension
11.	Coach removing his/her team from the field or forfeiting a scheduled game	\$ 150.00 fine	+ 1 game suspension
12.	Coach not controlling parents or spectators at an NISL event	\$ 200.00 fine	+ Possible Suspension
13.	Coach using profanity directed towards players, coaches or parents, before, during or after a game	\$ 200.00 fine	+ Possible Suspension
14.	Coach making racial comments	\$ 400.00 fine	+ 1 year Suspension

1203. Parent & Spectator Fines

VIOLATION		PENALTY / FINE	
01.	Parent & Spectator - Referee ABUSE	\$ 500.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension
02.	Parent & Spectator - Referee ASSAULT	\$ 1,000.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension
<i>Parents and spectators suspended from attending NISL games. NISL will investigate for other possible sanctions. Ex. Team removal from NISL or team may play all games away from home</i>			
03.	Parent or Guardian providing or imputing inaccurate pass information, ex. birth certificate, name, picture	\$ 400.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension + Forfeiture of Games
04.	Parent or Guardian registering players who are registered for two clubs simultaneously in NISL or registering for another NISL club.	\$ 400.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension
05.	Parent or Guardian found signing or producing falsified documents or ID'	\$ 400.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension
06	Parent or Guardian using profanity directed towards players, coaches or parents, before, during or after a game	\$ 200.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension
07.	Parent or Guardian making racial comments	\$ 400.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension
08.	Parents or Spectators being dismissed from the game (Coach Red Card)	1st offense \$ 300.00 club fine 2nd offense \$ 500.00 club fine 3rd offense \$ 800.00 club fine	+ 1 game suspension + 3 game suspension + league suspension
09.	Parent or Guardian found signing or producing falsified documents or ID	\$ 400.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension
10.	Parent emailing or contacting NISL Registered Players, Illegal Recruitment, Tampering, Poaching	\$ 200.00 club fine	+ Possible Suspension
11.	Parents encouraging players to practice, tryout, play in a game or Tournament without written permission from his/her NISL registered team or club	\$ 200.00 club fine	+ Player Suspension

1204. Substance Prohibitions for Spectators

All drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products are prohibited from being used at any NISL game, tournament, or practice. Use of any of these substances will be subject to ejection from the game, possible suspension from the League, and a fine.

1205. Illinois State Law

HB4023 Section 5. The Criminal Code of 1961 is amended by changing Section 12-2 as follows: (720 ILCS 5/12-2) (from Ch. 38, par. 12-2) Sec. 12-2. Aggravated assault. (a) A person commits an aggravated assault, when, in committing an assault, he:

(17) Knows the individual assaulted to be a sports official or coach at any level of competition and the act causing the assault to the sports official or coach within an athletic facility or an indoor or outdoor playing field or within the immediate vicinity of the athletic facility or an indoor or outdoor playing field at which the sports official or coach was an active participant in the athletic contest held at the athletic facility. For the purposes of this paragraph (17), "sports official" means a person at an athletic contest who enforces the rules of the contest, such as an umpire or referee; and "coach" means a person recognized as a coach by the sanctioning authority that conducted the athletic contest. b) Sentence. Aggravated assault as defined in paragraph (17) of subsection (a) of this Section is a Class A misdemeanor.

HB4120 Section 5. The Unified Code of Corrections is amended by changing Section 5-5-3 as follows: (730 ILCS 5/5-5-3) (from Ch. 38, par. 1005-5-3) Sec. 5-5-3. Disposition. a) Every person convicted of an offense shall be sentenced as provided in this Section. (11) The court shall impose a minimum fine of **\$1,000.00** for a first offense and \$2,000 for a second or subsequent upon a person convicted of or placed on supervision for battery when the individual harmed was a sports or coach at any level of competition and the act causing harm to the sports official or coach occurred within an athletic facility or within the immediate vicinity of the athletic facility at which the sports official or coach was an active participant of the athletic contest held at the athletic facility. For the purposes of this paragraph (11), "sports official" means a person at an athletic contest who enforces the rules of the contest, such as an umpire or referee; "athletic facility" means an indoor or outdoor playing field or recreational area where sports activities are conducted; and "coach" means a person recognized as a coach by the sanctioning authority that the sporting event.

1300. PROTESTS & APPEALS

Protests, Appeals, and Complaints are beliefs that a wrong has been done and requires correction.

1301. Disciplinary Powers

The NISL office shall have the authority to suspend, fine, or disqualify players, coaches, and other team officials or competing clubs for violating league rules or for any action or conduct not in the best interest of soccer or the NISL. Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team such as parents, relatives, and spectators are also subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the NISL.

1301a. Disciplinary Hearing/Committee

A disciplinary hearing is a meeting to decide whether or not a disciplinary action is needed for an incident with all parties having the chance to participate.

The NISL Disciplinary Committee shall consist of three persons.

All members of the NISL shall recognize any disciplinary action imposed by the Committee.

1302. Requirements

All protests, appeals, or complaints must specifically refer to the NISL Rule that is or has been violated. Should a rule not exist to resolve the protests, appeal, or complaint, then provide a simple statement on the problem.

1302a. Types of Protests

The NISL permits four types of protests, appeals, or complaints.

- 1) Events that occur on the field of play during a game or pre-game that have a direct bearing on the game or future game.
- 2) Between team management of both teams and/or players that are about events upon the field of surrounding the game. These have no direct impact on a game's outcome.
- 3) About the NISL, NISL office, staff members, or president of the official capacity
- 4) About a referee or linesperson

Decisions that arise out of the applicant of the rules of competitions, which is made in the course of competition and has no consequence beyond the competitions, shall not be appealable.

1303. Procedures

By playing in the NISL:

- 1) All questions relating to any dispute, protest, appeal, or complaint shall be refereed to the NISL Executive Office of the League or the committee appointed by it. Decisions of such committee shall be final and binding on both parties.
- 2) The league administrative office must receive appeals or complaints no more than forty-eight (48) hours following the scheduled game from which the protest arises and must be in writing.
- 3) To be valid and eligible for consideration, each protest, appeal, or complaint must be accompanied by a cashier's check in the amount of **\$100.00** to cover administrative fees and a written copy of the complaint including full particulars.
- 4) Any protest, appeal, or complaint relating to the grounds, goal post, bars, or other appurtenances of the game shall only be entertained if an objection has been lodged with the referee prior to the start of the game. When a complaint has been lodged, protest must be made and such a protest must not be withdrawn except by the consent of the NISL.

1303a. Due Process

- 1) NISL receives notice of violation
- 2) NISL collects information surrounding violation
- 3) NISL renders decision based upon information received
- 4) Appeal to NISL Appeals Committee within seven days of the violation
- 5) Within ten days of the appeal, the NISL Appeals Committee will arrange a hearing
- 6) After NISL appeal hearing, the Committee will render a decision

1303b. Restrictions

No player, coach, team, or club shall be represented by an attorney.

No NISL member, including, but not limited to, league officials, clubs, teams, players, coaches, parents of players, spectators, administrators, or referees may involve the aid of the courts in the United States or of a state without first exhausting all available remedies including hearings and appeals within the member association or league.

For violation of this bylaw, the offending party shall be subject to suspension and fines shall be liable to the NISL for all expenses incurred by the NISL and its officers in defending each court action including, but not limited to:

- 1) Court costs
- 2) Attorney's fees
- 3) Compensation for time spent by the NISL officials and employees in responding to an defending against all allegations in the action including all court appearances
- 4) Travel expenses
- 5) Any other expenses necessitated by the court action

1400. CODE OF ETHICS AND GUIDELINES

Entering any NISL competition is considered to be an automatic acceptance of the NISL's rules, policies and procedures including this Ethics Code, Guidelines and Rules.

In addition, all teams within a NISL Member Club will be held to the standards set forth in this Code of Ethics and Guidelines, regardless of which specific competition they play in. NISL's purpose is to set the highest standards for soccer clubs to develop youth players to their fullest potential – physically, emotionally, and ethically. As such, participants must conduct themselves to the highest standard. At all times, adult participants are expected to be role models for the youth involved in this league - exhibiting good sporting behavior in both victory and defeat.

All participants in NISL events are members of US Club Soccer and therefore must adhere faithfully, both to the letter and the spirit, to its stated bylaws, rules and policies, as well as the NISL Handbooks and the guidelines for new club admittance. In addition to those stated bylaws, rules and policies the following encompasses the NISL Ethics Policy:

1401. Section 1 - Definitions

Adult Member: Any Coach, Director of Coaching, Trainer, Manager, Official or other individual 18 years of age or older affiliated with a Club and having access to a Player, the Player's parents or the Player's contact information that is not available publicly.

Certified Referee Assignor: Any individual certified by the United States Soccer Federation to serve as a referee assignor.

Club: Any club or academy admitted to NISL or that is a member of US Club Soccer.

Coach: Any coach, assistant coach, or trainer employed by or volunteering for a Club.

Director of Coaching: Any individual employed by or volunteering for a Club as a Director of Coaching, Executive Director, Technical Director, General Manager or as an assistant to any of the above listed roles and all Adult Members filling similar roles regardless of title.

Field: Any field used by a club to conduct Tryouts, Training Sessions or Games (other than tournament games).

Game: Any NISL sanctioned game, including all league, play date and State Cup games. For purposes of this Code of Ethics, tournament games sanctioned only by US Club Soccer, IYSA or USYS are not deemed Games.

Manager: Any individual employed or volunteering to serve as a team manager, team parent or similar role regardless of title.

Official: Any individual serving as a Coach, Director of Coaching, Referee, board member, director or similar role for a Club.

Player: Any player holding a valid player pass from US Club Soccer and currently playing for an NISL or US Club Soccer Club.

Recruiting: Contact or communication with a Player who is registered to another NISL Club and asking them to a.) attend a Try-out without giving written notice to the player's current club Director of Coaching or Head Coach, or b.) attend a Training Session, or play or guest play for any other Team, without first receiving written permission from the Director of Coaching or Head Coach of the Player's then current Club.

Referee: Any referee licensed for the then current year by the United States Soccer Federation.

Trainer: Any adult employed by or volunteering for a Club as a trainer regardless of title. An individual will also be deemed a Trainer if they are privately training Players who play for another Club.

Training Session: Any Club sanctioned, or private, training session or practice. Training Sessions are limited to Players carded to play for the Club holding the Training Session.

Tryouts: Any Club advertised try-out session, including regularly scheduled tryouts and supplemental tryouts. Tryouts are open to all Players and all youth who are not Players but are interested in becoming Players.

1402. Section 2 - Basic Rules

1. No Adult Member will have in his/ her possession, or consume alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while attending an event sanctioned or sponsored by NISL.
2. All adults, including Adult Members, attending an event sponsored or sanctioned by NISL will exhibit and demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times, including, refraining from coaching from the sidelines, harassing Referees, Coaches or Players or behaving in a manner disruptive to the enjoyment of any other spectator.
3. Adult Members shall not attempt to entice a team or player to leave a Club to come to another Club.

1403. Section 3 – Clubs

1. All Clubs will have a Certified Referee Assignor.
2. Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their parents and any spectators on the sidelines of any NISL games.

1404. Section 4 - Code of Ethics

Purpose: This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of soccer within the NISL and US Club Soccer. This Code of Ethics is applicable to all Adult Members and Players though in many cases the Coach will be primarily responsible for insuring compliance. Punishments for violations of this code of ethics may be imposed upon a Club if committed by an Adult Member or other individual present at a Game or Training Session.

Responsibilities to Players

1. The Adult Member shall never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players.
2. Adult Members shall instruct players to play within the laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
3. Adult Members shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching or encouraging deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
4. Adult Members should not tolerate inappropriate or unsportsmanlike behavior at Games or Training Sessions from players or adults regardless of the situation.
5. The demands Adult Members place on Players' time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals or progress.
6. Adult Members must never encourage Players or other adults to violate NISL recruitment, eligibility or other rules and policies.
7. Adult Members should direct Players to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician's instructions regarding treatment and recovery.
8. Adult Members should take an active role in educating their Players about sports nutrition, fitness and about prevention of tobacco use.
9. Adult Members should educate themselves on a constant basis in order to provide their Players with the highest-level instruction possible.
10. Adult Members should always place the Player's development first and place Team success second.

Responsibility to NISL and Member Associations

1. All Adult Members will adhere at all times to all NISL, United States Soccer Federation and US Club Soccer rules and policies. In particular Adult Members must follow all rules and policies regarding eligibility, team formation and

Recruiting as those rules are mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of each Adult Member to know and understand these rules.

2. Any issues between Clubs should be addressed between the Clubs first. If the issue cannot be resolved between the Clubs, the involved Clubs should refer the issue to the NISL League Office.

Responsibilities to the Laws of the Game

1. Adult Members should be thoroughly acquainted with and a working knowledge of the Laws of the Game.
2. Adult Members are responsible to their Players understanding the the application of the Laws of the Game.
3. Adult Members must adhere to the letter and spirit of the Laws of the Game.
4. Adult Members are responsible for their players' actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with intent of causing injury to opposing players.
5. Adult Members must constantly strive to teach good sporting behavior.

Responsibility to Referees

1. Referees must have the support of Adult Members, Players and spectators. Adult Members must always refrain from criticizing Referees in the presence of Players or spectators.
2. Professional respect, before, during and after the Game, should be mutual. There should be no demeaning or threatening dialogue or gestures between Referee, Adult Members or Players.
3. Adult Members must not incite Players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of any Game.
4. Comments regarding a Referee should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the Referee. For purposes of making such comments, the comments should be directed in writing to the Regional Referee Coordinator and the Certified Referee Assignor for the Club hosting the Game leading to the comments.
5. Referee game decisions (including yellow and red cards) may not be appealed to either the NISL league Office nor the Appeals Committee.

Responsibilities Regarding Scouting and Recruiting

1. All NISL rules pertaining to Recruiting shall be strictly observed by all Adult Members as well as all official and unofficial team representatives. Unofficial team representatives include all parents of Players.
2. It is inappropriate to Recruit Player(s) unless the Director of Coaching of the Player's current Club provides written permission in advance of the initial approach to the Player. If a Player or parent of a Player initiates contact with any Adult Member of another club expressing intent to move to that Adult Member's club, it is the responsibility of that Adult Member or the Adult Member's Director of Coaching to inform the Director of Coaching of the Player's current club.
3. Inviting a Player to guest play without first submitting the proper US Club Guest Player Form shall be considered Recruiting.
4. It is unethical for a Player to be recruited from any outside program including but not limited to PDP, MDL, ODP, High School or the US Soccer Training Center, either by a coach working for such program or any other Adult Member, Player, parent or Official present at said event.
5. When discussing the advantages of his/her Club with a Player or a Player's parent, the Adult Member has an obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other Adult Members, Teams and Clubs.
6. It is unethical for any Adult Member to make a statement to a prospective Player which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.

7. It is unethical for Adult Members to attend Tryouts for other Clubs for the purpose of promotion or recruitment, unless invited by the Club conducting the Tryout in writing, or to have Players attend Tryouts at other Clubs to Recruit Players from the Club conducting the Tryout.

8. It is unethical for a Team or groups of Players to be Recruited from one Club to another Club by an Adult Member working in the Team's present Club, an Adult Member from another Club, or any Adult Member or representative from inside or outside the Club.

Responsibility of Public Relations

1. Adult Members have the responsibility to assist their Players in conducting themselves properly when in public and representing their team, their Club, US Club Soccer and/ or the NISL.

Other Responsibilities

1. An Adult Member's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, or herself his or her Club and the sport of soccer.

2. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.

3. The attitude and conduct of the Adult Member towards Officials, Players, spectators and other Adult Members should be controlled and undemonstrative.

4. It is unacceptable for an Adult Member to have any verbal altercation with an opposing Adult Member or Player before, during or after the Game.

5. Adult Members must use their influence on his/her teams' spectators to prevent intimidating and/or unacceptable behavior towards Officials including Referees, Player(s) and opposing team spectators.

1405. Section 5 - Referee Code of Ethics

1. Referees will maintain the utmost respect for the game of soccer, conduct themselves honorably, and maintain the dignity of their position at all times.

2. Referees will always honor an assignment or any other contractual obligation.

3. Referees should educate themselves on a constant basis so as to know the Laws of the Game, their proper interpretation and their application.

4. Referees will be loyal to their fellow Referees and never knowingly promote criticism of them.

5. Referees will maintain good physical condition so they are capable of discharging their responsibilities on the field.

6. Referees will control the Players and Coaches effectively by being courteous and considerate without sacrificing fairness.

7. Referees will not make statements about any games except to clarify an interpretation of the Laws of the Game.

8. Referees will communicate with players, coaches and spectators in a clear and professional manner.

9. Referees will arrive timely for all Games.

10. Referees will have appropriate attire, including badges at all Games.

11. Referees are not required to provide their name, badge number or other personal information to any Adult Member or Official other than as required on NISL game cards.

1406. Section 6 - Procedure for Filing and Appealing a PAD Report

Only the Director of Coaching or President of the Board of Directors of the protesting Club may submit a Incident Report to the PAD Committee. Reports forwarded by individuals other than the reporting Club's Director of Coaching or the President of the reporting Club's Board of Directors will be dismissed by the PAD Committee.
(<http://northernillinoisoccerleague.com/index.php/compliments-league-problems-protest-complaints>)

All issues forwarded to the PAD Committee will be dealt with first by the PAD Committee, and if necessary, on appeal, by the NISL Board of Directors ("BOD"). NISL Members alleged to be in violation of any provision herein, or any other stated United States Soccer Federation or US Club Soccer Codes of Ethics or other guideline will be required to stand before the PAD Committee. To hear an issue, the PAD Committee will be made up of at least three who will act as the NISL Ethics Committee.

1. Reports alleging violations of any NISL Rules, Policies, Bylaws or Codes may be made only by the Director of Coaching or Club President of the Club making the protest.
2. Only reports referring to specific violations of the NISL Code of Ethics will be heard by the PAD committee. Event specific protests such as scheduling or communication issues should be forwarded to the appropriate Event Coordinator. Club issues not covered in this Code of Ethics should be forwarded to the applicable RAC.
3. All reports must be made through the NISL's website.
4. Upon issuing a report, all members of the PAD Committee are notified. The Club that is the subject of the report will be notified within 48 hours of the making of the protest. Contact information provided on the NISL Premier Website will be used. The PAD Committee will not be responsible for Clubs not getting PAD information if their contact information is out of date.
5. The Club making the report should electronically forward to the PAD Committee all evidence, including, but not limited to, contact information, emails, photographs, statements and other written evidence they wish to have considered.
6. The Club and individual against whom a report has been filed will then have 72 hours to respond in writing to the allegations.
7. The reporting Club will then have 72 hours to respond in writing to the response from the accused Club and individual.
8. The failure of any Club or individual to respond at any point in this process will result in the PAD Committee ruling on the information provided to it.
9. The PAD Committee will then make a decision regarding the report, pending any additional investigation and inquiry the PAD Committee determines necessary or desirable.
10. The party against whom the PAD Committee ruled will have the ability, for 5 days after the PAD Committee publishes its ruling to appeal the ruling.
11. All appeals must be made in writing to the PAD Committee. To be valid, an appeal must be accompanied by an appeal fee of \$500. The club making the appeal must include the specific grounds for making the appeal and must specifically refer to the NISL bylaw, rule, policy or procedure that was inappropriately applied by the PAD Committee in making its decision. The fee for the appeal must be received by NISL within 3 calendar days of being filed and should be sent to NISL at NISL 545 Consumers Ave, Palatine, IL 60074.
12. All appeals of PAD Committee decisions will be heard by a committee of the NISL's Board of Directors.
13. The Appeal Committee will review the decision of the PAD Committee.
14. The Appeal Committee can decide to uphold the decision of the PAD Committee, overturn the decision of the PAD Committee or return the protest to the PAD Committee for a rehearing based upon the submission of new evidence that was not available to the PAD Committee when the PAD Committee made its decision.

1407. Section 7 - Penalties for Violations

Penalties for violations of the Rules, Regulations, Bylaws and other documents governing the Northern Illinois Soccer League.

1. Probation for the violating Club, Player and/or Adult Member.
2. Suspension of the violating Club, Player, and/or Adult Member.
3. Expulsion of the violating Club, Player and/or Adult Member.
4. Required education of the violating Club, Player or Adult Member.
5. Other penalties as are deemed appropriate by the PAD Committee.
6. Repeated violations by an Adult Member, Club or Player may result in stricter penalties.

1500. YOUTH CLUB STANDARDS

Background: One of the primary goals of US Club Soccer is to elevate the standard of the sport in the United States, specifically through improving the structure, operation, and programming within youth soccer clubs. In this sense, US Club Soccer endeavors to provide a path and process to improve the quality of the daily player experience by raising standards in club structure, organization and operation, and in coaching development and education. Clubs that are better structured, organized, and led will generally develop better players than those that are not; as such, the identification, establishment and elevation of club standards is critically tied to the player development process.

These Youth Club Standards are developed with the advice and assistance of U.S. Soccer technical staff, technical leaders from clubs throughout the country, and the US Club Soccer Board of Directors and staff. The standards will continue to grow and evolve over time, reflecting the changes, growth and improvement of club soccer in the United States.

This document outlines expectations for clubs in areas as diverse as facilities, operations, coaching education, and more. Furthermore, the document provides standards for three different levels of clubs:

Minimum Requirements: These are the basic minimum expectations a club should meet to qualify as a youth soccer club under US Club Soccer. These standards are set out as minimum requirements, without which it is virtually impossible to operate as a true soccer club.

Base Club Standards: These are standards that should be met, or be within the scope of the strategic growth plan, for the majority of youth soccer clubs across the country. The base club standards will cover a wide spectrum of clubs of various competitive levels. Differentiations between these clubs will not only be reflected in their size and mission, but also in the number of these standards met, the degree by which they are met, and the quality of the service or resources provided by the club and its staff within each standard.

National Premier Leagues (NPL) Standards: These are the standards that should be met by the top developmental clubs in the country in order for these organizations to truly be considered professional talent development organizations, and are supplements and additions to the Base Club Standards. Within US Club Soccer, top clubs participate in the National Premier Leagues (NPLs); for this reason, these standards are referred to as NPL Standards. These standards are considered when reviewing applicants to the NPL and in the on-going evaluation of current member clubs in the NPL. NPL clubs are expected to meet all minimum requirements and basic club standards, and make consistent progress in achieving new NPL standards each year.

Except for the minimum requirements, these Youth Club Standards are designed to be aspirational guidelines that reflect specific areas or platforms that clubs and club leadership should be targeting for growth, change, and improvement. The standards are categorized into the following three areas:

- 1) Technical: Staffing, Curriculum, Training, Additional Resources
- 2) Structural / Administrative: Organization, Structure, Finance and Member Management
- 3) Facilities: Training, Competition, and Corporate Facilities

Generally, the more standards that a club meets, the more successful that club will be in developing top level youth soccer players and fulfilling their club mission statement. However, standards provide only a baseline concept; the quality of the club leadership and staff (and its selection, training, and oversight), and the manner in which a program is executed, will ultimately set the ceiling of success for any club.

The future growth of the game, and improvement of the quality of the game in this country, will largely be a function of the standards to which clubs and coaches are held, or to which they hold themselves. The best clubs constantly evolve to expand and improve their structure and operations on and off of the field. These Youth Club Standards will hopefully help to provide a roadmap for doing so.

These standards should be reviewed on an annual basis by all clubs to identify new programming and operational ideas, changes and areas of growth for the future.

1501. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO QUALIFY AS A CLUB

Every club must:

1. Have a Director of Coaching in charge of the technical oversight of all teams and coaches within that club.
2. Be a registered corporate entity, either for-profit or not-for-profit, in good standing and have a club logo.
3. Have a mission statement identifying the primary purpose for the club's existence and its goals in player and personal development of its players. The mission statement should be realistic based on the club and community resources.
4. Have either a formal governance board or an advisory board to provide guidance and assistance in financial, legal, and other general business matters.
5. Have a conflict of interest policy that addresses the refusal of board members that have children in the club in situations that directly involve their children.
6. Have a clear organizational chart with all staff and their responsibilities, with job descriptions for all full-time staff.
7. Background checks must be conducted on all coaches and any adults that will interact with players on a regular basis.
8. Have a player and parent code of conduct.
9. Have a coach's code of conduct emphasizing that high degrees of professionalism, personification, and maturity are required from all staff.
10. Have an annual player registration process managed by a club registrar/administrator.

The above standards provide the platform from which a properly functioning youth soccer club can be built. The absence of any one of these standards in a youth soccer organization significantly impairs its chances of long-term success. When these standards are in place, additional programs, operations, staff, and resources can be created and deployed to improve the club's ability to successfully maximize the development of its youth soccer players.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS: Staffing, Coach Licensing² and Coaching Education:

● **Director of Coaching:**

12. Base Standards:

The Director of Coaching should:

- 12.1. Hold a U.S. Soccer "B" license, an NSCAA "Advanced National" license or international equivalent.
- 12.2. Have successfully completed the NSCAA/US Club Soccer Director of Coaching Diploma Course.
- 12.3. Have a collegiate degree.

13. NPL Standards:

The Director of Coaching should:

- 13.1. Be a full-time position, and the Director of Coaching should hold a U.S. Soccer "A" license, an NSCAA "Premier" license or international equivalent.
- 13.2. Be actively involved in regional or national coaching networks or professional coaching organizations.
- 13.3. Be actively involved in national talent identification and development programs.
- 13.4. Have experience coaching at different levels of the game, indicating a more comprehensive understanding of the player development path. Experience in two or more of the following levels is ideal: youth, collegiate, semi-professional / amateur, professional, youth national team.

● **Technical Leadership:**

14. Base Standards:

- 14.1. All coaches at U-10 and above should hold a U.S. Soccer or NSCAA license, or international equivalent.
- 14.2. Any parent coaches involved in the youth program should be supervised and trained by a full-time, professional soccer coach. While coaches may often have children in the club, no coach should coach their own child above the age of U-12.

15. NPL Standards:

- 15.1. Every club should have Technical Directors or Program Directors charged with technical oversight of specific age groups or programs within the club. For example: a U-15 through U-18 girls director, a U-15 through U-18 boys director, a U-11 through U-14 director, etc. The specific staffing model may vary based upon the size of the club, but should reflect age-specific programming and staffing.
- 15.2. All Technical Directors or Program Directors should be full-time, paid positions (ideally as employees, not independent contractors) with individuals that hold a U.S. Soccer "B" license, an NSCAA "Advanced National" license, or international equivalent.

- 15.3. All Technical Directors or Program Directors should be actively involved in regional or national coaching networks or professional coaching organizations.
- 15.4. All coaches at U-10 and U-11 should hold a minimum of a U.S. Soccer "D" license, an NSCAA "National" license, or international equivalent.
- 15.5. All coaches at U-12 and above should hold a U.S. Soccer "C" license, an NSCAA "Advanced National" license, or international equivalent.
- 15.6. Every club should have a specialist goalkeeping coach or goalkeeping staff that trains goalkeepers in every training session. All goalkeeping staff should hold a goalkeeping license from U.S. Soccer, the NSCAA, or international equivalent.

- **Coaching Education:**

- 16. Base Standards:

- Every club should:

- 16.1. Have annual funding for external coaching education and development of its staff.

- 17. NPL Standards:

- Every club should:

- 17.1. Have regular, at least monthly, meetings of full-time technical staff to review, discuss, and assess technical topics and the success of current training sessions, methodologies, and plans.
 - 17.2. Have a formalized self-assessment program combined with a peer-feedback program to allow for on-going learning and development of full-time staff.
 - 17.3. Have an internal coaching education and development program that provides 5-10 hours of in-house coaching development to its full-time staff each year.
 - 17.4. Have an internal coaching education and development program that provides 3-5 hours of in-house coaching development to its part-time staff each year.
 - 17.5. Have a coaching mentoring program allowing young staff the opportunity to observe and learn from senior staff within the training and competition environment.
 - 17.6. Have a club library or resource center with books, videos, and other informational resources regarding coaching methodology, training sessions, etc.

- **Curriculum and Methodology:**

- 18. Base Standards:

- Every club should:

- 18.1. Have a written, age-appropriate, developmental curriculum outlining the skills and concepts to be taught at every age group from U-6 through U-18 that is reviewed on an annual basis to identify areas for change and improvement.
 - 18.2. Ensure its curriculum is consistent with U.S. Soccer's recommended training curriculum, and has individual player development, not team development, at its heart.
 - 18.3. Have a training curriculum for Zone 1 players (ages 6-12) that focuses predominantly on individual technical development per U.S. Soccer guidelines.
 - 18.4. Provide regular free-play opportunities during the year for players of all age groups in the form of futsal or other small-sided competitions.
 - 18.5. Incorporate small-sided games in training curriculum and competition sizes in each age group per U.S. Soccer guidelines.

- 19. NPL Standards:

- Every club should:

- 19.1. Have written "self-training" or "soccer homework" for players at U-10 and below to facilitate individual training and parental education regarding development of young players.
 - 19.2. Have an Annual Training Plan for each team at U-11 and above, identifying training focus, intensity, and frequency throughout the year, and with periodization for pre-season, competition, and transition segments of the season.
 - 19.3. Complete an Annual Technical Report for each team at U-11 and above at the conclusion of each year including: (i) a summary of the training sessions throughout the year; (ii) a summary of the growth of the team technically and tactically throughout the year; (iii) a summary of the mental and psychological growth and performance of the team throughout the year; and (iv) individual player evaluations.
 - 19.4. Have an annual club assessment meeting to review the annual technical reports for all teams and

- identify areas for improvement and change for the future.
- 19.5. Create an in-house Zone 1 competition program to maximize flexibility and minimize travel for these age groups.
 - 19.6. Have a review and assessment process for its coaches every year to determine whether players are progressing through their development appropriately, whether concepts are being taught and retained by players, and whether the curriculum is being successfully implemented.
 - 19.7. Maintain a player database for tracking of players at every age group, their development, and the depth of the player pool.
 - 19.8. Have a consistent style of play and vision of the game across all teams within the same gender.
 - 19.9. Have a testing program to measure baseline and growth in the physical attributes of speed, strength, power, and agility at relevant age groups.
 - 19.10. Have a testing program to determine technical proficiency of players in basic technical skills at relevant age groups.

1502. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

● Training Ratios:

20. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 20.1. Have a minimum training-to-game ratio of 2:1 for teams at U-11 and above, with trainings that range from 60-105 minutes.
- 20.2. Provide regular training frequencies 10 months of the year, with approximately two periods of 3-4 weeks each of mandatory "break" for each player to allow recovery and rejuvenation. One break should be provided after the completion of the fall / winter competitive season, and one break should be provided after completion of the spring / summer competitive season.

21. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 21.1. Have a minimum training-to-game ratio of 3:1 for teams at U-11 and U-12, with trainings that range from 60-105 minutes.
- 21.2. Have a minimum training-to-game ratio of 4:1 for teams above U-14, with trainings that range from 60-105 minutes.
- 21.3. Limit the participation of their teams at U-14 and above to competitions with only one game per day.
- 21.4. Have a specific technical and tactical functional training program for each position at U-14 and above.

● Training and Competition Environment:

22. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 22.1. Have regular access to high quality training facilities with the following minimum standards for teams at U-13 and above: at least half of a full-sized field per team, at least two portable goals per team, and at least one ball per player.

23. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 23.1. Have a full-sized field for training top teams in each age group at U-15 and above.
- 23.2. Have standard training apparel for teams to promote a professional atmosphere within the training environment.
- 23.3. Have a standardized, dynamic warm-up for each program within the club.
- 23.4. Provide regular opportunity for top players at younger age groups to train with players in older age groups, and where appropriate, to compete with teams in older age groups.
- 23.5. Limit parental presence at trainings to create a professional educational environment.
- 23.6. Have protocol and procedures for team travel (logistics, appearance, behavior, itinerary, etc.)

● Talent Identification:

24. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 24.1. Participate in the scouting and recommendation process for US Club Soccer's id2 National Player

Identification and Development Program, and encourage their top players to participate in this program or other national player identification programs.

25. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 25.1. In addition to participation in the id program, assist in the organization and facilitation of USClub Soccer Player Development Programs (PDPs) to provide further identification, scouting and development opportunities for top players.
- 25.2. Cooperate with U.S.Soccer technical advisors and scouts and should recommend top players for consideration in U.S. Soccer Training Centers.
- 25.3. Have a program to identify the top players within their local markets at every youth age group.

● **Player Evaluation:**

26. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 26.1. Provide written annual evaluations to assist players in identifying areas of strength and weakness.

27. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 27.1. Provide post-match written evaluations identifying areas of strength and weakness, and areas for future focus and training emphasis.
- 27.2. Provide quarterly player evaluations to assist players in identifying areas of strength and weakness, especially in technical areas, and areas for future training focus.

● **Additional Educational Resources:**

28. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 28.1. Provide education and assistance to its members regarding the college recruitment/selection process.

29. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 29.1. Provide players and parents access to resources regarding proper nutrition, hydration and rejuvenation.
- 29.2. Integrate age-appropriate strength, agility, and coordination training into their annual training plans.
- 29.3. Provide video analysis of matches for teams at U- and above throughout the year to enhance development and learning.
- 29.4. Have a relationship with local physical therapy organizations and orthopedic groups to provide quick access to treatment or diagnostics for their players.
- 29.5. Provide an international trip for players at U- and above to aid and enhance development.

1503. STRUCTURAL / ADMINISTRATIVE STANDARDS: Entity / Organization:

● **Operations:**

30. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 30.1. Have at least one part-time administrative staff member to serve as a registrar and operate the club. Administrative staff should be in the office a minimum of four hours per day, five days per week.
- 30.2. Have a formal review and evaluation process for all full-time staff every year.

31. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 31.1. Have a strategy or program to identify, hire, and retain new coaches and staff, as well as lateral hires of experienced coaches and staff.
- 31.2. Have an annual strategic planning and goal-setting meeting to determine direction and focus for the future of the club, short-term and long-term.
- 31.3. Have a 5-year strategic plan outlining the goals and objectives of the club in player development, facility development, and coach development. This plan should be reviewed and assessed annually.
- 31.4. Have a full-time executive director or business manager to manage finances, logistics, and other business tasks of the club. This position may report to the Director of Coaching or directly to the Board of

Directors depending upon the club and the skills of the individuals involved.

31.5. Have an Executive Director/Business manager with a college degree in business administration, sports administration, or something similar.

31.6. Have full-time administrative staff to operate the club.

● **Team Structure:**

32. Base Standards:

Every club should:

32.1. Best structured as a pyramid, with a broad base of players and multiple teams in each age group at young age groups, narrowing to fewer teams at the senior age groups.

32.2. Have a U-20 through open adult program, consisting of former youth club players and others, to provide "member for life" programming.

32.3. Have a recreational program, with emphasis at U-6 through U-10. The best players within this program should be encouraged to "move up" to more selective programs as appropriate by their ability.

33. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

33.1. Be vertically integrated with boys and girls teams at every age group from U-6 through U-18.

33.2. Have training pools that regularly allow the top players from multiple age groups to train to go there.

33.3. Have a non-going player evaluation process allowing flourishing players from second teams to train at some regular interval with the top team in the age group as dictated by the player's performance.

● **Finance:**

34. Base Standards:

Every club should:

34.1. Have an annual, centralized budget and financial account through which all coaching salaries, player registration, facility payments, and other major financial obligations are managed.

34.2. Have a system of financial and accounting controls and policies to manage assets and to prevent theft or embezzlement, including an annual accounting review.

34.3. Have a basic fundraising program to help minimize costs of participation for all players.

34.4. Have a scholarship program to reduce or eliminate costs of participation for players with significant financial need.

35. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

35.1. Have a fundraising or sponsorship program to reduce or eliminate costs of participation for elite, national-level teams and players.

35.2. Have a marketing and sponsorship program designed to attract corporate and other sponsors to defray costs of participation or to provide funds for capital projects.

● **Member Management and Communications:**

36. Base Standards:

Every club should:

36.1. Have written policies outlining player expectations, player commitment expectations, and player release.

36.2. Have annual member meetings with its players and parents, either as an entire club or on a per-team basis, to clearly outline expectations and standards at each age group.

36.3. Have a volunteer recruitment and development plan to engage all members in club activities and to defray costs of operation.

36.4. Have a clear communications plan to ensure that messages from US club soccer, U.S. Soccer, and other peer clubs are promptly and efficiently distributed to relevant staff and membership, and that staff members are responsive to inquiries within these communications in reasonable time frames.

36.5. Have a website for dissemination of information regarding the club, its players, its leagues, and other relevant information to the public. This website should be updated at least every 48 hours.

36.6. Have a newsletter or other publication, electronic ideally, released at least quarterly updating membership on news and accomplishments of the club or its members.

36.7. Have a website that serves as a functional tool for player registration.

36.8. Have an annual social event to promote inter-club relationships and club culture.

36.9. Have an alumni program to keep former players and coaches connected with and engaged in the club.

36.10. Have a community outreach program to promote volunteerism and to engage club members

37. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 37.1. Have a parent education program designed to educate parents regarding soccer and the development process of soccer athletes, particularly for elite athletes, and parents' role within it.
- 37.2. Have a mentorship program for senior players to serve as role models and mentors for players in the younger age groups.

1504. FACILITY STANDARDS

● **Playing Facility:**

38. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 38.1. Have access to at least one high quality competition field that allows the ball to run smoothly which is appropriately lined per FIFA rules with benches for players and restrooms or port-a-potties. Turf or natural grass is acceptable.

39. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 39.1. Have a dedicated training facility that is owned or leased by the club with at least training fields with multiple goals of varying sizes on each field.
- 39.2. Have access to a stadium-like facility for high profile games, including locker rooms, signage around the field, electronic scoreboard, and bleachers or stands for spectators.

● **Offices and Clubhouse:**

40. Base Standards:

Every club should:

- 40.1. Have a club office with dedicated phone, fax, and mail.

41. NPL Standards:

Every club should:

- 41.1. Have a club-house with individual offices for all full-time coaching staff, including conference rooms for team and player meetings.
- 41.2. Own or have access to facilities allowing speed, strength, and power training for its elite athletes.
- 41.3. Have a training room to house on-site trainers or medical professionals, with medical supplies and equipment, including without limitation recovery pools and other rehabilitation tools, to allow pre-training / pre-game preparation and post-training / post-game rejuvenation and recovery.