

**STANDARD**

**REGIONAL GUIDELINES**

Region \_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledges they are operating under the Standard Regional Guidelines with approval below.

Region \_\_\_\_\_ Regional Guidelines are attached and approved below.

APPROVED BY: Regional Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED BY: Area Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED BY: Section Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received by the NSTC: \_\_\_\_\_





# STANDARD REGIONAL GUIDELINES

(revision 3-2006)

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## **ARTICLE ONE**

### **PURPOSE**

These Standard Regional Guidelines have been adopted by the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) pursuant to the authority granted in AYSO National Bylaw Section 1.03 (a) (6) to provide guidance to the region in its organization and operation.

Under AYSO National Bylaw Section 1.04 (l) and National Policy Statement 6.1, the region has the responsibility to operate in accordance with these Standard Regional Guidelines unless the region has adopted separate regional guidelines approved by the region's area director and section director.

These Standard Regional Guidelines are subject to AYSO's Articles of Incorporation, National Bylaws, National Policy Statements, National Rules and Regulations, Section Rules and Regulations, and area guidelines (AYSO's "operating regulations"). All operating regulations are available on-line at [www.soccer.org](http://www.soccer.org), and copies of these documents will be made available by the region upon request and are hereby incorporated by reference as a part of these Standard Regional Guidelines. These Standard Regional Guidelines are meant to enhance and to conform with the operating regulations. To the extent that there may be any contradiction or conflict among these documents, the operating regulations shall prevail.

These guidelines, or such other guidelines as the region may adopt, must be made available upon request to the members of the region pursuant to AYSO Bylaw 1.04 (l).



## ARTICLE TWO

### MISSION

The AYSO Mission is to develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on the AYSO philosophies:

**Everyone Plays** – Our region’s goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

**Balanced Teams** – Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

**Open Registration** – Our program is open to all children between 4 and 18 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

**Positive Coaching** – Kids win when they are built up, not when they are torn down! We train and encourage our coaches to make the extra effort to understand and offer positive help to our players, rather than negative criticism.

**Good Sportsmanship** – We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.



## ARTICLE THREE

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGION**

The duties and responsibilities of the region shall be, to the extent permitted by its size and available resources:

1. To operate and offer a quality youth soccer program to all youth from 4 through 18 years of age in a safe, fun, fair, positive environment that complies in letter and spirit with the Bylaws, policies, rules, regulations, and philosophies of AYSO;
2. To maintain good community relations and become involved in youth development and other community activities;
3. To register in the AYSO online registration system or with the National Support & Training Center (“NSTC”) all participating players, coaches, referees, administrators, and other volunteers prior to the commencement of the membership year or, if registered during the membership year, within 30 days following such registration;
4. To assign players and coaches to assure proper balance of teams within each age division within the region or within a reasonable part thereof;
5. To obtain and maintain safe playing facilities;
6. To obtain and be accountable for uniforms, balls, goals and other equipment and to use such equipment in a safe manner;
7. To schedule practices and games;
8. To recruit and assign volunteer coaches and referees, and train them through clinics and audio/visual programs;
9. To disseminate information to the participants, their families and the community concerning the region and its programs;
10. To recognize volunteer efforts;
11. To hold periodic meetings of the regional board and disseminate to the participants, their families and the community appropriate information concerning the operation of the region by the board;
12. To comply with AYSO policies and procedures relating to financial matters; including:
  - a) to publish for the region and for the files at the NSTC, and make available to the participants and their families at least annually, financial statements of the region and



guidelines for the operation of the region approved by the area director and section director, or in the absence of such guidelines operate the region in accordance with the Standard Regional Guidelines as are in effect from time to time;

- b) to collect and disburse fees and other monies ensuring the sound financial organization and operation of the region, to keep and submit to the NSTC, as required, accurate financial records to insure continuation of the tax exempt status of AYSO;
  - c) to participate in the National Accounting Program; and,
  - d) to pay the NSTC the national player fee and all amounts due with respect to the region's purchases from the NSTC within the payment guidelines established by the national treasurer.
13. To elect or appoint, at a minimum, a regional commissioner, treasurer, risk manager/safety director, coach administrator, referee administrator, registrar and child and volunteer protection advocate;
  14. To comply with the Soccer Accident Insurance (SAI) plan and to submit insurance claims according to current procedures;
  15. To notify the National Support & Training Center immediately of any threatened or actual claim or lawsuit against the region, its participants, or AYSO;
  16. To implement AYSO's national programs available to the region at least once a season;
  17. To cooperate with neighboring regions, and area, section and development personnel, to promote growth, development and cooperation throughout AYSO;
  18. To participate in area, section and national events and programs; and
  19. To cooperate in policies and procedures developed by the board or the National Support & Training Center with respect to requiring each coach, referee, and other designated volunteers to complete a volunteer form, and with respect to verifying the information obtained, before permitting the coach, referee or such volunteer to participate.



## **ARTICLE FOUR**

### **MEMBERSHIP IN THE REGION**

1. There shall be three kinds of members in the region:
  - a) Participating Members: those persons serving the region in a coaching, refereeing or administrative capacity, including the members of the regional board (“board members”).
  - b) Playing Members: all registered soccer players (“players”).
  - c) Contributing Members: those other persons to whom the regional board grants membership to recognize a contribution of value to the region or to express its gratitude.
2. No one will be considered a participating member or a playing member unless and until an application is submitted using the appropriate forms prescribed by AYSO.
3. The names, addresses and telephone number of all members of the region, as well as the information contained in the AYSO Executive Member Directory or any AYSO database, are private and confidential. Such information and mailing lists may not be disclosed or distributed to anyone, including any vendor or sponsor, without the prior written approval of the national executive director.



## ARTICLE FIVE

### **MANAGEMENT OF THE REGION**

1. The regional commissioner, with the support and assistance of the regional board, shall conduct the business and affairs of the region.
2. Unless otherwise specifically provided by these guidelines, all decisions of the regional board shall be made by a majority decision of the board members voting on any such matter; provided, however, that the regional commissioner may veto any such decision if the effect of such decision would be to violate any of the national operating regulations. Such veto may be reviewed by the area director (the “AD”) on request by a 1/3 vote of the board members voting on such matter. By a 2/3 vote of the entire regional board, any other issue may be put to the participating members of the region, subject to fair and reasonable voting procedures to be adopted by the regional board.
3. Upon the creation of the region the regional commissioner shall appoint the initial regional board to serve until the next scheduled board meeting, at which time nominations and voting for board positions will take place.
4. The regional board shall fix, at its initial meeting each year (“annual meeting”), the time, date and place of each regular meeting of the regional board and send notice of such annual meeting to all participants in the program. In addition, the regional commissioner, the regional secretary or 1/3 of the board members may call a special meeting of the regional board on three days’ prior notice stating the purposes of such meeting, which notice may be given in writing, by telephone or in person. A majority of the board members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of holding either a regular or special meeting. It shall be the policy of the region to hold at least one board meeting in each month during the primary season and at least one every two months during the remainder of the year. The regional board shall provide for the taking of minutes of the proceedings at each meeting and make them available to the members of the region. All regional board meetings shall be open to all participating members unless the regional board determines that it is necessary to hold an executive session. An “executive session” is permitted only to review personnel matters, disciplinary matters, or legal matters, and should not be used where a vote upon any issue involving the affairs of the region is taken.
5. At least one month prior to the annual meeting, the regional commissioner shall appoint a nominating commission consisting of board members and a reasonable number of persons who are not members of the board, but not less than three in number. The nominating commission shall publicize to the participating members of the region the regional board positions to be voted upon. Regional board members need not be parents of players in the region. The nominating commission shall recruit and recommend board members for the next twelve months and accept other names of persons to be considered by the regional board for such positions. At the annual meeting, the board members shall be appointed by the regional commissioner on the recommendation of the nominating commission and with



the approval of a majority of the outgoing regional board (if any), to hold office for twelve months. The regional commissioner may choose not to appoint an individual to a board position, even though recommended and approved, if the regional commissioner deems there is sufficient reason not to make the appointment. In such case, the regional commissioner shall ask the nominating commission to recommend additional candidates for approval and appointment. This inclusive and democratic process should be followed any time there are board positions to be filled, with the only exception being the appointment of the inaugural regional board (see paragraph 3).

6. At least three months, and preferably six months, before the expiration of the regional commissioner's term, or whenever there is a vacancy in the regional commissioner position due to death, resignation or removal, the regional board shall constitute a nominating commission. Such nominating commission may be the same nominating commission appointed pursuant to the preceding paragraph. The nominating commission shall submit its recommendations of one or more candidates for the position of regional commissioner to the regional board. The regional board shall, by a majority vote, nominate a regional commissioner and forward such nomination to the region's area director as directed by National Bylaw Section 7.03. In the absence of a regional board, or in the absence of a nomination by a majority of the regional board, the regional commissioner will be nominated by the region's area director. A nominee for regional commissioner is subject to approval of the area director, section director and National Board of Directors and is effective only upon approval of the National Board of Directors. The National Board of Directors has full discretion to disapprove a nominee or approve a nominee for a term of three years or for a shorter period as it sees fit.
7. In the event of a vacancy in the position of regional commissioner other than at the expiration of the regular term, the regional board, including (if available) the outgoing regional commissioner, shall recommend an interim regional commissioner and submit such recommendation to the area director. The interim successor shall remain in office until the completion of the election procedures in paragraph 6.
8. The regional commissioner shall serve a term of three years, subject to the terms of approval set forth by the National Board of Directors (see paragraph 6). The regional commissioner may serve multiple terms so long as he or she is nominated and appointed as indicated above.
9. It is the general policy of the region that the regional commissioner will have normally served at least one year on the regional board before serving as regional commissioner.
10. It is the general policy of the region that the regional commissioner not serve as a coach or assistant coach, nor hold any other board or staff position in the region, except with the approval of the regional board. Where the regional commissioner or other board member also serves in another volunteer capacity, the regional board shall, at a minimum, adopt special procedures to insure that decisions affecting the regional commissioner acting in such other capacity are made by other, disinterested board members. The regional



commissioner shall act in all other ways to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

11. No board member or any other participant in the region shall receive monetary or other compensation for his/her services to the region, nor may he/she use his/her position to benefit him/her directly or indirectly in any other way, such as a supplier of equipment or camp programs to the region. Nothing in this paragraph prohibits any regional board or staff member, or regional volunteer, from being reimbursed for his or her out-of-pocket expenses incurred for work on behalf of the region with the approval of the regional board.
12. Any vacancy on the regional board, except that of regional commissioner, may be filled by a majority vote of the then remaining board members, even if less than a quorum, and the person filling such vacancy shall serve until the next annual meeting and until his/her successor has been duly appointed.
13. Any board member (except the regional commissioner) may be removed in accordance with Article Nine, paragraph 4, of these guidelines. The regional commissioner may be suspended by the area director or the section director and suspended or removed only by the National Board of Directors in accordance with Sections 3.07 and 7.03 of the National Bylaws.



## ARTICLE SIX

### OFFICERS

1. The regional board shall, at a minimum, consist of the regional commissioner, the regional treasurer, the regional risk management/safety director, the regional coach administrator, the regional referee administrator, the regional registrar and the regional child and volunteer protection advocate. The regional board may create, designate, appoint, or elect such other voting board, or non-voting staff, positions including one or more assistant regional commissioners, a regional secretary, a regional coach trainer, a regional director of referee instruction, a regional director of referee assessment, age division directors, a director of playing fields, a team parent coordinator, a director of public relations, a statistician/scheduler, a director of purchasing, a director of volunteer recruitment and development, a regional auditor, and such other positions as the regional board may from time to time deem desirable. In addition, there may be such members-at-large as the board shall create. All members of a regional board understand and agree that they are fiduciaries of, and owe a duty of loyalty to AYSO, and agree to be bound by its Bylaws, Policies, Rules and Regulations.
2. Position descriptions for all positions may be found and downloaded from the AYSO Web site, [www.soccer.org](http://www.soccer.org), or may be obtained by calling the Supply Center to order the complete list. For specific position description requests, please call the Certification Associate at the National Support & Training Center. Every volunteer should have a copy of their position description, and current copies should be kept in the region for succession planning purposes.
3. A brief and general overview of the duties and responsibilities of the seven mandatory board positions follows.
  - a) **Regional Commissioner:** The AYSO volunteer position of regional commissioner is intended to have the responsibility and the authority to manage the day-to-day business of the region, within the framework of the AYSO operating regulations.
  - b) **Regional Treasurer:** The AYSO volunteer position of regional treasurer is intended to have custody of all funds and securities, evidence of indebtedness and other valuable documents, and shall deposit funds and securities in the name and to the credit of the region in a bank or depository.
  - c) **Regional Safety Director:** The AYSO volunteer position of regional risk management/safety director is intended to be responsible for all aspects of the region's safety and oversee the equipment, nets, fields, and clean-up for fields of the region.
  - d) **Regional Coach Administrator:** The AYSO volunteer position of regional coach administrator is intended to administer a quality coaching program within the region.
  - e) **Regional Referee Administrator:** The AYSO volunteer position of regional referee administrator is intended to implement, monitor, and maintain the AYSO National Referee Program including program delivery, staff development, communication, and



coordination at the regional level.

- f)* **Regional Registrar:** The AYSO volunteer position of regional registrar is intended to plan and implement the annual registration of all players and volunteers.
- g)* **Regional Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate (CVPA):** The AYSO volunteer position of regional child and volunteer protection advocate is intended to oversee the child and volunteer protection program in the region in accordance with the AYSO Safe Haven program.



## ARTICLE SEVEN

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

#### **1. Team Assignments**

Teams shall be formed as set forth in the National Rules and Regulations, Articles II and III. Team assignments of players shall be made by those persons delegated such task by the regional board. Retention of players on any team shall be limited to the head coach's child(ren). Otherwise there shall be no automatic retention of players on any specific team or with any specific coach from the previous season. Every attempt shall be made to balance the skill level of teams within each division. Once teams are formed, no transfer of any player from one team to another may be made without the approval of the coaches of both teams involved, the age division director (if any), the regional commissioner and the parent or guardian of the player. In the case where teams are involved in inter-regional play, no transfer of any player from one team to another after such teams are formed may be made without the additional approval of the area director and, if affecting section play, the section director.

#### **2. Registration Fees; Refunds**

The registration fee for each player participant shall be fixed annually by the regional board. The fee for the current year is set forth in Appendix D to these guidelines. The regional board may by specific grant or scholarship, or by regional policy, waive such registration in whole or in part with respect to any participant if such fee would create a hardship for such participant or his or her family. Any player who withdraws from the program shall be entitled to a refund of such registration fee. In exceptional circumstances, the cost of the uniform (if it cannot be reused) or other specific non-recoverable costs may be deducted from the refund.

#### **3. Eligibility**

All boys and girls, between the ages of 4 and 18, based on their age as of July 31 of the year in which the membership year begins shall be eligible to register for the program, subject to field availability, volunteer support, AYSO operating regulations, and such rules as may be issued by the regional board. It is the duty of the region to assure that only eligible players are permitted to register and play.

#### **4. Length of Season and Cancellation of Games**

The length of any playing season during the year shall be of such duration as determined by the regional board, and as set forth in the regional calendar attached to these guidelines. Inclement weather or poor field conditions may necessitate from time to time the postponing or canceling of games. Any such postponement or cancellation will be made at the discretion of the regional commissioner or the regional safety director as early as



practical before game time. Once the game begins, only the referee in charge of the particular soccer field may suspend or cancel the game, except that the regional commissioner or designate may suspend or cancel games due to inclement weather or other conditions that may warrant such action.

## **5. Attendance; Participation**

Every player shall be entitled to play at least half of every game. Moreover, it is the policy of the region to encourage each coach to (a) play each player at least three quarters of every game, whenever possible, and (b) to allow different players to start the first quarter of each game. It also is the policy of the region, in divisions U-12 through U-8, to have different players play the same number of quarters as goalkeeper, if any, as in any other different field position. Each player is strongly urged to attend every team practice. Any player who misses' practices regularly may have his/her playing time limited to one-half (but not less than one-half) of a game.

## **6. Protests**

No protest of games shall be permitted. However, coaches are encouraged to file with the regional referee administrator a written report within 48 hours after a game of any misapplication by a game referee of the Laws of the Game or rules and regulations. This procedure shall not be used as a means of complaining about or criticizing any judgment call of a referee or assistant referee. If, after investigation by the regional referee administrator, it is found that a law, rule, or regulation was misapplied, such referee shall be so informed in order to ensure that no further misapplication occurs.

## **7. Conduct during Games**

The highest standards of conduct and good sportsmanship must be maintained at all times by players, coaches, referees, spectators and all other participants. Offensive, insulting or abusive language is forbidden. The use of alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal drugs in the vicinity of the playing field during practices or games is strictly forbidden.

All participants must wear the official uniforms, as described in paragraph 12, for all games and dress in them in a neat, clean manner. The use of shin guards is required at all practices and games.

Coaches are expected to be positive and set the best possible example for the participants. Excessive coaching from the sidelines shall not be permitted, and the function of the coach should be to provide encouragement and a positive direction. The coach may enter the field of play only with the consent of the referee and may coach only within 10 yards in each direction from the half-way line of the field (in no event in either of the penalty areas or from behind the goals).

Spectators at games must remain behind the spectator control line (three yards from the



sideline) and between the penalty areas and their vocal efforts should be limited to positive compliments to the participants. Spectators are expected at all times to act positively around players and to demonstrate respect for opponents, officials, and all other volunteers. Under no circumstances should they attempt to coach or address remarks derogatory to players, coaches or the referee.

At the end of the game, the players on each team shall line up and shake hands with the players of the opposing team and thank the referee and assistant referees.

Discipline shall be up to the referee at each game. The referee shall have the power and authority to caution and send off players and warn and expel coaches (as well as spectators, in the case of outside interference) from the playing area, or terminate the match if necessary, if their conduct violates the Laws of the Game, these guidelines or otherwise interferes with the course of play. No appeal of disciplinary action taken by a referee shall be allowed.

A player who is sent off for violation of the Laws of the Game shall be suspended for the duration of that game and shall not participate in the team's next scheduled game. A player who is cautioned or sent off may be subject to additional disciplinary action (*e.g.*, parent conferences, additional game suspensions, expulsion) at the discretion of the regional board upon thorough review of the incident following the procedures outlined in Article 9 (Dispute Resolution). A coach, assistant coach or spectator who is warned or expelled from the field may also be subject to similar or additional disciplinary action at the discretion of the regional board upon thorough review of the incident following the procedures outlined in Article 9 (Dispute Resolution)..

## **8. Refreshments at Games**

It shall be the responsibility of each team to supply its own refreshments. It is suggested that the best kind of refreshment is cool water. It is the responsibility of the coach and team parent participants to assure the absence of any drug, stimulant or other harmful substances in any refreshment given to any player.

## **9. Parental Participation**

As AYSO is an "all-volunteer" organization, each parent or guardian who has a player in the region shall be strongly encouraged to volunteer his or her valuable time and services in some way. The region shall not reduce or eliminate the player fee based upon voluntary work done by a participant's parents or guardians and shall not charge an additional fee to those parents of players who do not volunteer their services or who do not donate funds to the program. No fee distinction shall be made based upon parental or player participation in regional fundraising activities. The region may not condition the registration of a player based upon any requirement of volunteer participation by a parent or guardian.



## **10. Facilities**

It shall be the responsibility of both teams for the first game each day to set up the goalposts and nets and both teams for the last game of each day to take down the goalposts and nets. Each field shall be lined under the direction of the regional commissioner and/or the director of playing fields, and each group of fields shall be provided with a first aid kit. No trash should be left at the facility except in designated containers. Parking shall be limited to those areas designated at the fields.

## **11. Sponsors**

The region encourages local businesses and individuals to support its program. Suitable recognition shall be given to them. Contributions are strongly encouraged to be made to the region rather than to a particular team. All such contributions are considered charitable contributions and are deductible for U.S. tax purposes, subject to the applicable limitations in the Internal Revenue Code. It is the responsibility of any sponsor to comply with the Internal Revenue Code and AYSO will give no opinion on whether a particular donation is or is not deductible.

## **12. Equipment**

The region shall make arrangements to supply each player with a shirt with the original AYSO logo properly affixed thereto and, if possible, a pair of socks, and shorts. Each player is expected to provide his/her own appropriate footwear and shin guards. No player may participate in a game without such shirt, socks, shorts, appropriate footwear and shin guards. Players may not wear jewelry of any kind (including chains, watches, body jewelry and earrings), bandanas or other ornamentation or anything else that may, in the opinion of the referee, create an increased risk of injury to himself or herself or to other players during the game.

Medical information bracelets should not be removed, but can be covered with a soft wrist band or temporarily modified to fit more snugly. .

Prescription eyeglasses may be worn, but must remain firmly on the wearer's head or restrained by a strap. Non-prescription eyeglasses and sunglasses are not permitted to be worn by a player during a game.

Hard casts (including padded casts), splints, helmets and hard padding are not permitted to be worn by a player during any game or practice.



## ARTICLE EIGHT

### **FINANCIAL, BANKING AND RELATED MATTERS**

#### **1. Budget; Financial Statement**

The regional board shall adopt an annual budget which provides the basis for setting player registration fees. At the end of each season, the regional board shall cause to be prepared a statement of income received and amounts expended in connection with the program. Such statement shall be made available for review by the parent or guardian of each player and a copy shall be made available upon reasonable request. This year's budget and last year's Statement of Income and Expenses are attached hereto as Appendices.

#### **2. Account Signatories**

All checks drawn on any bank account maintained by the region shall bear two signatures, one of which must either be the regional treasurer's or the regional commissioner's. Additional signatories must be authorized by regional board action. Two signatories from the same household shall not be allowed. There must be at least three signatories on all regional bank accounts. Regional debit and/or credit card accounts are expressly forbidden.

#### **3. Transfer of Funds**

All funds received by the region, whether from fees, gifts or otherwise, must be deposited into the region's checking account, from which all expenses and disbursements must be paid. All funds transferred in or out of the region's savings account must be transferred from or to the region's checking account. No regional expenses or reimbursements are to be paid from monies collected which have not first been deposited into, and accounted for within, the regional checking account.

#### **4. Cash Handling Procedures**

The regional treasurer in cooperation with other regional board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to cash receipts and cash disbursements. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

- a. Funds withdrawn for "cash box change" must be deposited back into the regional bank account on the same day, or the first banking day thereafter.
- b. All registration fees collected in cash and checks must be reconciled to the bank deposit slip and the AYSO registration forms.



- c. Arrangements should be made to have the cash received deposited into the regional bank account on the same day such cash is received, or the first banking day thereafter.
- d. When handling a significant amount of cash monies, at least two regional volunteers should be present.

## **5. Receipt Procedures**

The regional treasurer in cooperation with other regional board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to receipts for monies received. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

- a. A cash receipt book must be used to record all payments received on behalf of the region in cash. The original cash receipt for each transaction must be given to the payer, and the copy kept in the cash receipt book. All cash receipts must be signed or initialed by the volunteer completing the cash receipt form.
- b. The cash receipt book must be reconciled to the bank deposit slip.
- c. A volunteer accepting payment for registration fees should note upon an available portion of the player registration form: (a) the amount of the payment received; (b) whether such payment was made in cash or by check; (c) the check number (if paid by check); (d) the date such payment was received if different from the date of the parent or guardian's signature on the player registration form; (e) the names of any other family member players for whom the payment was received; and (f) the initials of the volunteer receiving such payment.

## **6. Immediate Accounting to Regional Treasurer**

The regional treasurer in cooperation with other regional board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to the immediate accounting to the regional treasurer for monies received, checks written upon the regional bank account, invoices received for accounts payable by the region, and requests for reimbursement to regional volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the region. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

- a. No one should sign a regional check in blank or which contains any item to be filled in later.
- b. No one should sign a regional check without verifying the expense by examining the invoice or request for reimbursement.



- c. No requests for reimbursement to regional volunteers shall be honored without a written request signed by such volunteer, itemizing the out-of-pocket expenses incurred, and with supporting receipts or other documentation attached.
- d. All bills and invoices received for payment by the region must be forwarded to the regional treasurer for payment, if not already paid, within five (5) days of the receipt.
- e. The regional treasurer must be notified of any checks written on the regional bank account without his or her knowledge within 48 hours of the issuance or delivery of such check for payment of any regional expense.
- f. All bank withdrawal transactions and regional checks shall be noted with the appropriate National Accounting Program (NAP) code denoting the purpose for such transaction

## **7. Immediate Deposit Procedures**

The regional treasurer in cooperation with other regional board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to the immediate deposit of monies received. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

- a. All fees collected on behalf of the region for registration, sponsorships, fundraising, and donations or for any other purposes shall be deposited immediately after being reconciled with the appropriate cash receipt book, registration form, and/or bank deposit slips.
- b. Under no circumstances may any person accept on behalf of the region any post-dated check or agree to hold any check for deposit on a later day.

## **8. Monthly Bank Reconciliations**

All region accounts shall be reconciled by the regional treasurer, and verified by another board member who is not authorized to sign on the accounts. The reconciled statement(s) and copy of bank statement must be presented to each board member at their regularly scheduled meeting.



## **9. Credit/Debit Card Transactions**

If credit/debit cards are accepted for payment of registration fees, all required accounting shall be performed and submitted on the first banking day after each credit/debit card transaction.

## **10. Audits**

It is strongly recommended that each region have a regional auditor. Additionally, the region at all times shall cooperate with, and respond to, inquiries by the area auditor and section auditor.



## ARTICLE NINE

### **DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

#### **1. General Policy**

It is the policy of the region to resolve all disputes involving persons involved in the region in an amicable way, if possible. Compromise should be emphasized whenever possible, and personality conflicts should be avoided. If disciplinary action is found to be necessary, it is the region's policy to take only the minimum action necessary. All means available should be taken to avoid legal action.

It is the policy of the region to avoid punishing the players for the conduct of the parents except when there is no other solution (*e.g.*, where a parent cannot or will not cease his or her disruptive behavior).

It is the policy of the region to avoid wiping out years of good memories of AYSO and good service to AYSO, and that suspension or removal procedures are to be used only as a last resort. Voluntary resignation is preferable to a suspension or removal procedure.

It is the policy of the region to avoid publicizing the suspension or removal proceedings beyond those persons who need to know, and to respect the privacy of the individuals involved. However, the regional commissioner or regional board should notify the area director, the section director, the National Support & Training Center or members of the AYSO Legal Commission of the pending proceedings pursuant to the operating regulations, and must comply with all applicable regulations and laws requiring suspension for abuse and similar events.

#### **2. General Due Process Procedures**

Disputes involving day-to-day activities of the region should first be addressed and resolved, if possible, by the appropriate board member in charge of the activity and/or then by the entire regional board, if necessary. Disputes arising out of game conduct should first be addressed and resolved, if possible, by the regional referee administrator and/or then by a disinterested review board appointed by the regional commissioner and/or then by the entire regional board, if necessary.

If it is determined that it is necessary that a person involved in the region needs to be disciplined, or that his or her participation in the region should be limited or terminated, then the regional commissioner or the regional board shall give notice to such person of such intention, initially by telephone, FAX, in writing via email or in person. Notice should always be followed by a written confirmation delivered via certified mail. Such notice shall specify the action to be taken and the reasons therefore. Such notice shall further notify such person that he or she, upon request, will be given a reasonable opportunity to explain why such action should not be taken. Such opportunity to respond may be in person at a



hearing, by telephone or in writing. The regional commissioner or regional board may appoint a disinterested hearing board or committee of neutral persons to consider such discipline. After such opportunity to respond has been given, the regional commissioner, regional board, hearing board or committee shall make its determination and announce it in writing to all persons concerned.

### **3. Suspension**

The regional commissioner or regional board may suspend a person involved in the region from further involvement in the region's activities if there is found to be an imminent danger to players or to the program by his or her continuing involvement, or if it is determined the person has been arrested or is under investigation for a crime that, if convicted, would rule out the person's continued involvement. Notice must be provided and a hearing conducted, if requested, according to the procedures described in Paragraph Two above. A suspension is considered to be temporary in nature, and any such suspension may be removed or set aside by a majority of the regional board at any time.

### **4. Removal**

The regional commissioner or the regional board may remove a person (whether or not suspended) involved in the region, from further involvement in the program. Such removal may only be made upon prior notice and after a determination is made that removal is appropriate, as the result of a disciplinary hearing described in Paragraph Two above. Such removal is only permitted when there is found to be (a) a violation of the National Bylaws or of the rules, regulations, policies or philosophies of AYSO or (b) conduct which disrupts the region's or AYSO's activities or programs.

### **5. Hearing Procedures**

Any disciplinary hearing shall be held at a neutral location. The hearing procedures shall be communicated to and understood by all parties prior to the commencement of such hearing. All interested parties are to be informed of the date, time, and location of such hearing.

A person who has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter shall not participate in any stage of the procedure. A person has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter if that person's conduct is in any way called into question by the events, or if that person is a witness to the events, has a familial relationship with any person involved in the matter, has a financial interest in the outcome, or whose judgment, for any reason, cannot be unbiased and neutral. In the event the regional commissioner has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter, any authority herein to be exercised by the regional commissioner shall be referred to the area director.

A committee or hearing board of disinterested persons shall conduct the hearing as quickly



and as fairly as possible, but may structure the proceedings as circumstances may require to keep them as positive as possible as well. The committee or hearing board may ask such questions and request such documents or other evidence as may be necessary to obtain all pertinent facts, but should refrain from being overbearing with such examinations and requests. It is strongly recommended that players and other minors not be asked to participate as witnesses or to offer “testimonials” either in person or in writing unless it is absolutely necessary in order to determine any pertinent fact of the matter. The proceedings should be kept as confidential as may be necessary to protect all parties. The committee or hearing board shall listen to the facts of the situation from all interested parties. Each “side” may be permitted or requested to make their presentations outside the presence of the other if necessary to prevent undue acrimony or harm to the participants. Parties do not have the right to involve attorneys or to cross-examine other parties or witnesses, although either may be permitted within the discretion of the committee or hearing board if it believes that such participation will be helpful and positive.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee or hearing board shall adjourn to a private session where the decision will be reached. Under no circumstances shall the committee or hearing board deliberate in the presence of the parties involved in the dispute. The committee or hearing board will then decide the issues raised pursuant to AYSO operating regulations and these regional guidelines based on the evidence submitted, and by a majority vote determine the appropriate action to be taken. Such action may include that no action should be taken against the individual accused, or that a warning or caution be given, that a written reprimand be given, that further education or probation be required, or that such person should be suspended or removed from involvement in regional activities. Where the hearing board recommends removal or where otherwise determined appropriate, the individual in question should be given an opportunity to resign voluntarily. All interested parties shall promptly be notified of such resignation or, in the absence of a resignation, of the hearing board’s decision.

## **6. Review**

Any determination made in accordance with this Article shall be final and binding on all concerned unless it is determined by the area director, or, if he/she is not disinterested, the section director, that such determination was arbitrary and capricious, or that the procedure was not fair, or that the person or persons making such determination are found not to have been disinterested. Any interested party dissatisfied with the decision or action taken by the committee or hearing board may request a review of such decision by the area director, section director or National Board of Directors, as may be appropriate pursuant to the operating regulations relating to dispute resolution and due process. There shall only be one review of each matter.



## ARTICLE TEN

### **CHANGES IN GUIDELINES**

#### **1. Approval of Guidelines**

These guidelines shall become effective after being approved by the regional commissioner and the existing regional board, the area director and the section director, and then submitted to the National Support & Training Center.

#### **2. Change in Guidelines**

Once adopted, these Guidelines may only be amended by the regional board by a 2/3 vote of the regional board members, with the approval of the regional commissioner, the area director and the section director, and then submitted to the National Support & Training Center.



## **SAMPLE APPENDIX**

<b>APPENDIX A</b>	List of the members of the regional board Title, Name, Address and Telephone Number
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<i>200_</i> Budget
<b>APPENDIX C</b>	<i>200_</i> Statement of Income and Expenses
<b>APPENDIX D</b>	Registration Fee Schedule
<b>APPENDIX E</b>	Regional Calendar
<b>APPENDIX F</b>	Blood-Borne Disease Policy and other safety policies
<b>APPENDIX G</b>	Volunteer Application Form



**SAMPLE LETTER FROM REGIONAL COMMISSIONER TO ALL MEMBERS**

A message to all members:

Date \_\_\_\_\_

AYSO Region \_\_\_\_ is a member program of the American Youth Soccer Organization, a nationwide, non-profit youth soccer organization founded in 1964. AYSO is an affiliate member of the United States Soccer Federation. Its programs are based on five principal tenets:

**Everyone Plays** – Our region’s goal is for kids to play soccer – so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

**Balanced Teams** – Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible – because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

**Positive Coaching** – Kids win when they are built up, not when they are torn down! We train and encourage our coaches to make the extra effort to understand and offer positive help to our players, rather than negative criticism.

**Open Registration** – Our program is open to all children between 4½ and 18 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

**Good Sportsmanship** – We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

American Youth Soccer Organization Region \_\_\_\_\_ has produced these regional guidelines in order to provide each of you with information about the program you have joined.

These regional guidelines have been approved by the regional board of directors of region \_\_\_\_\_ and may only be changed by the board. Any proposed change may be submitted in writing to the board for its consideration. The significant changes from last season are as follows:

*(Description of Changes)*

AYSO has a National Support & Training Center in Hawthorne, California, with a full staff to assist our region in maintaining its programs. Our region is located in Area \_\_\_\_\_ in Section \_\_\_\_\_ and has the benefits of the area staff, directed by \_\_\_\_\_ (the Area Director), and the section staff, directed by (the Section Director).

I am the regional commissioner of our region and am responsible to the AYSO National Board of Directors and, together with our regional board, to you for running our program. As regional commissioner I want to welcome you to AYSO Region \_\_\_\_ either as a returnee or as a newcomer and hope that you enjoy being a part of the ever-growing AYSO family.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Commissioner



**SAMPLE LETTER FROM REGIONAL COACH ADMINISTRATOR TO ALL COACHES**

A message to all coaches:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome to AYSO Region \_\_\_\_\_. We thank you for volunteering your time and service to our program. It is important that you understand and implement AYSO’s philosophy, for it is you who will have the most contact with and impact upon our young participants and their parents.

First, make sure you know the game and the coaching techniques AYSO has found to be most successful. We have several publications which can help you, and we will hold a series of clinics coordinated by me. It is imperative that you participate in one or more of these clinics so that you can promote the very best and latest in instruction to the players on your team. (*Insert time, date and place of clinics*). I will be glad to assist you personally in any way I can.

Second, remember that we are playing the game for fun and for the fun of the children. While you should encourage the very best performance out of your team, never lose sight of the fact that it is just a game and played for fun within the AYSO philosophies of Everyone Plays, Balanced Teams, Positive Coaching and Good Sportsmanship.

Third, remember the “Everyone Plays” rule. Every one of your players must play at least half of each game. It is suggested that the same players should not always sit out the first quarter of each game, so that they do not think of themselves as permanent substitutes, and that, if possible, players should play at least three-quarters of some games.

Fourth, cooperate with the referees. They are volunteers like you and are called upon to make judgments like you. Please insist that the parents of the players maintain decorum at all times. Remember—we do not allow protests.

Fifth, present an attitude of good sportsmanship, in both word and action, to your players and their parents. We desire to create a positive environment based upon mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude.

Sixth, and finally, hold practices once or twice a week, depending on field availability and your own time commitments. The practices mean more than the games. Plan your practices in advance, as time is limited.

Have a great season and best of luck to your team.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Coach Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number



**SAMPLE LETTER FROM REFEREE ADMINISTRATOR TO ALL REFEREES**

A message to all officials:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome to the officiating team of AYSO Region \_\_\_\_\_. We sincerely appreciate the fact that you have volunteered your time and service to help the youth of our region have FUN through the game of soccer. That’s right! We're all here to have FUN!

AYSO's objective is to help America's youngsters between the ages of 4 and 18 develop in body and character through participation in the game of soccer. AYSO's principles of everyone plays, balanced teams, positive coaching, open registration, and good sportsmanship are all designed to make AYSO soccer a positive, enjoyable experience for our players.

As an AYSO referee or assistant referee, it will be your primary responsibility to ensure that everyone — players, coaches, spectators, and you—has fun during the game. In AYSO we call it “positive refereeing.”

How do you learn how to be a positive AYSO referee? Read on...

AYSO has developed a comprehensive National Referee Program designed to provide you with the instruction, assessment, and support you need and deserve to perform your responsibilities. Trained staff is in place at the regional, area and section levels to deliver this program to you. All that you have to do is to give AYSO what amounts to a relatively small amount of your time.

In Region \_\_\_\_\_, we will be holding a series of instructional clinics prior to the beginning of our playing season. These clinics will be reinforced with game observations by trained AYSO assessors to provide you with positive feedback on your field performance. In addition, periodic referee meetings will be held throughout the season to discuss areas of mutual interest or special concern.

You will soon be receiving a schedule of our pre-season referee clinics. Please mark the dates on your calendar and make sure you attend. Remember, we can provide you the tools you need to make your AYSO officiating experience one of competency and enjoyment—but only if YOU make the effort to take advantage of our training.

Thanks again for volunteering. If you have any questions, doubts, or fears, please give me a call. See you at our first clinic, scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Referee Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number