



# **ROWLETT YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION**

## **Rules & Regulations**

**Revised August 2021**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION & STATEMENT OF POLICY**

## **1.1. Purpose**

The Rowlett Youth Soccer Association (hereinafter referred to as “RYSA”) has been formed to create and maintain a soccer program for the residents of Rowlett, TX and Rockwall, TX. This program is provided in order to organize a competitive activity to foster and promote good sportsmanship, clean and healthy fun, development of athletic skills, and fellowship among players, coaches and spectators.

## **1.2. Authority**

RYSA is a member in good standing of the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA); which in turn, is affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the official soccer governing bodies of the USA and the world, respectively. As such, RYSA is the official Rowlett soccer program recognized by the entire world and has been given jurisdiction over organized soccer within the prescribed physical boundaries. All teams (coaches and players) and parents, by the act of forming teams, submitting contracts and rosters, and payment of fees, agree to accept and to abide by the Bylaws, Rules & Regulations, all decisions of the Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") and NTSSA.

## **1.3. Code of Ethics/Conduct**

All players, coaches, assistant coaches, team managers and parents are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the purpose of RYSA on and off the field. In the event of conflict or disagreement, all players, coaches, and parents are advised to pursue any such problems through the established RYSA guidelines. Any case of significant or continued activity, which causes disruption to the overall purpose, shall be dealt with by RYSA to the extent necessary to remove or eliminate such disruption(s). Any Board members serving in another capacity such as a Coach, Manager, or Referee cannot enact their role or position of authority on the board for any conflict or disagreement directly involving the team(s), player(s), or game(s)/match(es) to which they serve or attend except when no other Board member(s) or Referee official(s) are available to immediately intervene or effectively remedy the situation. In the event of such occurrence the Board must be given a full, detailed report for review and disciplinary action, if warranted. The voting membership of RYSA is made up of the coach of each registered Team. Only this group may vote on changes to RYSA Bylaws, Rules & Regulations and/or for members of the Board.

## **1.4. Application**

The RYSA Rules & Regulations are designed specifically for the youth play.

## **2. SOCCER YEAR**

- 2.1. The Soccer Year shall begin September 1st and end on the following August 31st.
- 2.2. The actual playing year will consist of a fall and spring season.
- 2.3. Each playing season will consist of up to (10) games for U8 and above and (8) games for U6.
- 2.4. The season playing dates will be set by the Board with consideration of holidays, other organized sports, and weather.

## **3. COMMUNICATION**

RYSA requires that all participants not only receive all pertinent information about the program but also have adequate and continuing opportunity to have their inputs to the soccer association. In order to develop and maintain two-way communication, organizational meetings are required to be held each playing season.

### **3.1. General Coaches Meeting**

- 3.1.1. The Board, near the conclusion of each soccer season, will schedule a General Coaches Meeting.
- 3.1.2. Each team is required to provide a rostered representative in order to vote for any rule changes, Board elections and general association business.
- 3.1.3. The Board Secretary will record the attendance of the teams and notify the appropriate Age Group Director of the teams failing to attend.
- 3.1.4. The agenda of the meeting will be as follows:
  - Review of minutes from the last meeting.
  - Registration Issues.
  - Rules or Bylaws changes or updates.
  - Administrative procedures or responsibilities.
  - Questions or problems suggested by the team representatives.

### **3.2. Director Age Group Meetings**

- 3.2.1. Each Age Group Director is required to conduct a mandatory meeting for all of the coaches/teams' representatives before the playing season begins. The Age Group Director shall submit a report of the agenda and the attendees to the Board.
- 3.2.2. The agenda of the Age Group Director's meeting will be as follows:

- Division, organization, number of teams, and team colors.
- Policy and division structures.
- Field maintenance and equipment policy.
- Trophy policy and post season tournament procedures (if applicable).
- Registration, RYSA Rules & Regulations, with special emphasis on any revisions or potential problem areas.
- Playing time, 50% of game unless disciplinary reasons.
- Any questions or problems brought out by the team representative for action by the Board.

### **3.3. Team Meetings**

3.3.1. Each team is required to conduct a pre-season team meeting with at least one of the parents or guardians of each player in attendance.

3.3.2. The agenda of the meeting must cover the following topics:

- NTSSA/RYSA participant conduct and regulations.
- Review the RYSA Rules and Regulations for additional understanding of the game.
- Team rules with emphasis on practice schedules, team support, notification procedures, and required equipment.
- Schedules, fees and post season plans.
- Review registration procedures for the next schedule. If a player is assigned to a team they will remain a member of that team. There is no reason to register in the player pool unless assignment to another team (for whatever reason) is desired.
- Any questions or problems brought out by the parents for action or consideration by the Board.
- Playing time, 50% of game unless disciplinary reasons.

## 4. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### 4.1. Players

#### 4.1.1. Age Parameters

4.1.1.1. The player's age will be determined by the age of the player as of December 31 of the current soccer year. All age divisions will be confined to birth year classifications.

4.1.1.2. Players must participate in their respective age bracket based on the following NTSSA age breakdown as follows:

Under 4 (3 yr. old)	
Under 5 (4 yr. old)	Under 12 (10/11 yr. old)
Under 6 (5 yr. old)	Under 14 (12/13 yr. old)
Under 8 (6/7 yr. old)	Under 16 (14/15 yr. old)
Under 10 (8/9 yr. old)	Under 19 (16-18 yr. old)

4.1.1.4. Players who have not attained the proper age to be eligible for the Under 12 age bracket will not play or practice on a competitive team or in a competitive tournament per NTSSA rules.

4.1.1.5. A player with advanced ability may play in the next age bracket with permission of the receiving and releasing Age Group Directors. Proper procedure for this type of request is in writing, signed by a parent or guardian.

4.1.1.6. A player may return to the proper age level provided that the parent would submit a written request to the RYSA Registrar. The RYSA Registrar will obtain permission from the receiving and releasing Age Group Directors.

4.1.1.7. A player with significant mental or physical deficiencies may petition NTSSA Executive Committee to play in a division one age group lower than his actual age indicates. However, such player must be of physical size so as not to gain an undue advantage over the other players in the younger division. The player petitions RYSA first and then if approved, RYSA forwards documentation to the NTSSA Executive Committee. Three weeks processing time is required. REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION:

- A letter from the parent and a letter from the doctor.
- A letter of approval, from RYSA, which is filed with the NTSSA Recreational Director and the NTSSA Board.

#### **4.1.2. Player Registration**

4.1.2.1. All player registration documentation must be complete and submitted to the RYSA Registrar within 48 hours *prior* to the first regular season game.

4.1.2.2. Each player must complete a RYSA Player Registration Form either online, by mail, or in person.

4.1.2.3. A player is registered when the parent signs the registration form, pays the appropriate association fees, meets the age verification requirements, and has a release from their home association if not living in City of Rowlett (per rule 4.1.4).

4.1.2.4. Players added after the season starts must be approved by the RYSA Board or a committee formed to act in this capacity. Players may not be added to any team after the 2nd weekend of the season, except in the case where a team drops below the minimum roster count. (Defined as “5pm of the second (2nd) Saturday” of age division.) Absolutely NO roster changes will be allowed after October 13 of the Fall Season or April 13 of the Spring Season.

#### **4.1.3. Age Verification**

4.1.3.1. A player shall be required to present proof of age when registering for the first time in RYSA. Proof of age shall consist of a birth certificate, or birth registration issued by an appropriate government agency, Bureau of Health records, passport, alien registration card issued by the U.S. Government, a certificate issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service attesting to age, or a certificate of an American citizen born abroad issued by the appropriate government agency. Hospital, baptismal or religious certificates will not be accepted.

4.1.3.2. No further proof of age shall be required so long as a continuous season-to-season registered status is maintained, unless proof of age is again required by the board.

#### **4.1.4. Releases**

4.1.4.1 Players must register to play soccer with a Member Association. Upon request, no Member Association is permitted to deny a Player Release to an individual player. No fee may be associated with an approved Player Release unless such player is being released outside of North Texas Soccer. Only the receiving Member Association will register the player. A Member Association may not actively recruit players from outside of their defined territory.

A player must obtain a release from their Member Association under the follow criteria:

4.1.4.2. If a player joins a competitive team.



4.1.4.3. Once a player has been released to play on a competitive team outside the RYSA jurisdiction, then that release is valid as long as the player plays in a competitive soccer league. This release is voided if the player returns to play in a recreational league.

4.1.4.4. Players requesting to play in a tournament with another team.

4.1.4.5. Players requesting participation in clinics during the season must also complete and submit a coach's release.

#### **4.1.5. Registration Fees**

4.1.5.1. Payment of all fees is required within 48 hours prior to the start of scheduled play each season (as cited in rule 4.1.2.1).

4.1.5.2. The registration fee is broken down into the following cost centers:

- NTSSA registration fees
- Insurance premiums
- Security background checks for all volunteers working with the children
- Referee fees
- Trophies/Awards
- City imposed fees
- Office support expenses

4.1.5.3. Each player who is not properly registered will forfeit all games in which the team or player participated. The coach and player(s) shall be required to appear before the A&D Committee. A violation of this rule shall result in the offending Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager or player being suspended for a minimum of one year from all soccer-related activities.

4.1.5.4. Each player must be registered with only one team at a time. The only exception is for players who may also be members of official school teams.

4.1.5.5. Refunds prior to the start of the season must be requested in writing from the parent/guardian of the player requesting the refund, directed to the RYSA Office. No refund will be considered if the player requests a refund after the official start date of the season regardless if the player participated or not.

#### **4.1.6. Team Administration**

4.1.6.1. Each RYSA volunteer Coach, Assistant Coach, and Team Manager is required to promote and uphold the purpose and goals of the Association as set forth in the Bylaws.

4.1.6.2. A coach's invitation may be withdrawn if he/she does not promote and uphold the rules of RYSA or the Laws of the Game. Any three (3) members of the Association may petition the A&D committee to review a coach's invitation. The review will be conducted per the A&D Committee guidelines.

4.1.6.3. Head Coaches must attend the appropriate coaching clinic to obtain the required coaching certification within one year of the start of a season for the highest division for which they are registered to coach. The purpose of the clinics is to introduce modern soccer coaching methods, raise the level of play within RYSA, and provide for the development of the players to their full potential. The following coaching certifications are recommended as age appropriate:

- U4 thru U8: U6/U8 Youth Module
- U10: U10/U12 Youth Module or U12 Module
- U12: U12 Module
- U10 thru U13 & above: National E School
- U14 and up: National D School (\*National E is a prerequisite to National D School enrollment)

4.1.6.4. The Coach, Assistant Coach or Team Manager must be present with and responsible for the team and spectators during any game. Otherwise, the team must forfeit.

4.1.6.5. The Coach, Assistant Coach or Team Manager should refrain from excessive instructing from the sidelines. This will promote player thinking and communicating during the game.

4.1.6.6. Paid coaches are not permitted for the purposes of coaching a recreational team.

4.1.6.7. All coaches, assistant coaches and managers, whose name appears on the roster, are required to obtain a RYSA ID card. An individual is considered to be rostered personnel when they have completed and submitted a Risk Management form to the association, along with having their name appear on the roster or any subsequent Add/Transfer/Delete forms (which must be signed by the coach and Registrar). Any person who does not provide a Risk Management form or does not appear on the roster will not be issued a card. In the event that a team does not have a rostered coach present, person who provides an ID card, but is not a rostered team representative, will be permitted in the coaches' box, nor will they be allowed to function as the coach of that game. Rostered personnel who have been ejected will surrender their ID cards to the official upon request. Surrendered ID card(s) will be returned, pending the results of an A&D hearing. Failure to surrender ID card upon request will result in suspension until such time the card is surrendered to a RYSA official, no less than one game.

4.1.6.8. One ID card, per rostered individual, per team will be issued, upon that person's entry into RYSA. After the first soccer year that an ID card has been issued, a validation stamp will be provided by the association to maintain the card's validity. If an ID card is lost or becomes damaged beyond recognition, a replacement fee of \$5 will be assessed to the individual needing the replacement. Replacements needed due to RYSA error or occur as a result of added/changed coaching responsibilities will not be assessed a fee.

4.1.6.9. ID cards will be issued at registration or other times/dates/sites identified by the Board.

4.1.10. Parents who wish to serve as a registered volunteer for their child with special needs, who believe their child requires additional parental assistance from both the touchline (known as the spectator's sideline) and the player sideline, shall submit documentation of the needs required to the Board of Directors via their Age Group Director. If approved, the parent must register as a volunteer, which includes successful completion of the NTX required background check, successful completion of safe sport and payment of the badge fee, a special badge can then be obtained from the Registrar. Denials of a request can be appealed to the Board of Directors following 7.4 Appellate Procedures in the RYSA Rules & Regulations.

Registered volunteers that have been approved by the Board of Directors, pursuant to this rule, shall follow the below guidelines:

- Prior to the start of the game, the head coach and the registered volunteer shall notify the opposing team and the referees of their status and present their badge identifying them as a registered volunteer for a their special needs player.
- Registered volunteers shall be allowed to walk the touchline (known as the spectator sideline), so long as they do not remain standing directly in front of spectator's benches, and do not excessively coach their special needs player from that sideline. They are there to assist in the starting or stopping of play when necessary for their child. No interaction with the other players on the field of play is acceptable.
- Registered volunteers shall be allowed to walk the player sideline, so long as they do not remain standing directly in front of the opposing coaches and their bench, and do not excessively coach their special needs player from that sideline. They are there to assist in the starting or stopping of play when necessary for their child. No interaction with the other players on the field of play is acceptable.
- Registered volunteers shall not stand or operate on the ends of the fields near the goals or corner flags.
- Registered volunteers should not interfere with the match in any way, beyond assisting their own special needs child.

#### **4.1.7. Registration**

4.1.7.1. Each Coach, Assistant Coach or Team Manager of a team must register with NTSSA each soccer year.

4.1.7.2. Each Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager must provide a copy of a valid photo I.D. plus a completed NTSSA Coach/Referee/Volunteer Staff Application. These documents must be submitted with the team paperwork at the time of registration. Team registration will be refused without the proper documentation.

4.1.7.3. Any individual offering or participating in individual/team practices or training sessions, soccer camps, skill camps, and/or similar activities involving RYSA players, must be registered.

4.1.7.4. The Registrar will not accept full team registrations after the last registration date established by the Board, without Board approval.

4.1.7.5. In the event that any team representative pays any fee to RYSA with insufficient funds the replacement funds in the form of cash, money order or cashier's check must be submitted to the RYSA Treasurer. Replacement funds must be accompanied with an additional \$25 in order to cover processing expense.

4.1.8. Players-at-Large (Non-Rostered Players) are players who are not registered in any association in NTSSA, but who want to participate in North Texas sanctioned events as guest players, may register with their home association as a player-at-large. Players must abide by RYSA guidelines for registration, including completing and submitting a recreational membership form and providing proof of age verification. Fees will include the amount set forth by NTSSA for insurance, plus any administrative fees the board determines is appropriate.

#### 4.2.1. Team Size

The Age Group Director shall utilize the following Guidelines for team size:

Age Group	MAX	MIN
Under 19/16/14	18	14
Under 12	14	11
Under 10	11	8
Under 8/6/4	8	5

#### 4.2.2. Team Formation

4.2.2.1. A team from outside RYSA applying to play within RYSA must follow RYSA team formation rules and receive approval of the Board.

4.2.2.2. The formation of teams and the solicitation of coaches and new players are the responsibility of RYSA Officers and Directors.

4.2.2.3. Each player who has played the most recent season in RYSA is considered a returning player. If a player does not meet this requirement he/she is considered a new player.

4.2.2.4. All new or transfer players will be placed in the RYSA player pool. Teams will be formed by a team formation committee that will consist of 3 voting members and 1 non-voting member. The 4 members shall be: Age Group Director for the specific division, a board member, a neutral RYSA member volunteer, and the RYSA Registrar. The voting committee members will not have a household member in the division forming teams. The committee is under the jurisdiction of the RYSA Registrar. The team formation committee will use age, gender, and team size as criteria in assigning players to teams. The final determination will be by the team formation committee using one or more of the following methods:

- A. School District Assigned School
- B. Address
- C. Lottery

4.2.2.5. Players who missed up to one (1) year may be eligible to return to their prior team of record provided that: 1) they enter the pool, 2) there is space on the requested team, 3) the Director will contact the Coach before allocation of player(s).

4.2.2.6. U4, U5, U6, U7, & U8 players may invite a friend, from the same association, who has never registered in any association, to join his/her existing team with the permission of the Board.

4.2.2.7. A new player may refuse the initial team assignment and be placed back in the bottom of the player pool if there are more than three (3) teams in the division. If the player refuses a second time or if there are less than three (3) teams then that player will be disqualified from placement for the rest of the season. The player will be given a refund minus the customary admin fee. A returning player may opt to not return to his team of record if there are more than three (3) teams in that division. If there are more than three (3) teams that player will be placed in the player pool and assigned per team formation procedures. If there are less than three (3) teams, this player will not be placed without approval of team formation committee.

4.2.2.8. If an individual becomes the head coach of a new team formed by RYSA in the current season, the coach may request their child be rostered to the new team that he/she is coaching.

4.2.2.9. If an individual requests their child be transferred to a returning team they are coaching, they must have been the head coach of record for the previous outdoor playing season or asked to be the head coach of the returning team by a majority vote of the Board.

4.2.2.10. Each Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager must contact all rostered players still eligible to play on the teams within the 1st week of the player pool commencement. This will advise the players that the team is going to participate again this season, and who is returning/not returning to play.

4.2.2.11. The Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager shall inform their Age Group Director of the player status of their team.

4.2.2.12. Each Coach must accept all eligible returning players unless he can show ample proof that the player is a disciplinary problem and disruptive to the team. Under no circumstance shall any coach attempt to dismiss a player without RYSA approval.

4.2.2.13. Each Coach may approach the Board to remove a player per the following:

- The Coach must submit a written request to the A&D Chairman.
- The A&D Chairman shall investigate/interview all interested parties and decides if the request is to be granted.
- The A&D Chairman decision may be appealed in writing to the A&D Committee. The A&D Committee shall address the issue within seven (7) working days.

4.2.2.14. "Player dismissal" shall be defined as including the failure or refusal of any coach to invite or notify a prior season player when the team is being reestablished for a new season.

4.2.2.15. In the event that a team is going to take a season off from playing and intend to return their entire roster, they must inform their Age Group Director and RYSA Registrar of intent to return the following season, in writing, prior to the completion of the current season.

## **5. Game/Practice Participation and Administration**

### **5.1. Practice Sessions**

5.1.1. Players may not participate in more than two (2) practice sessions per week except as authorized by the Age Group Director.

5.1.2. All practice sessions shall be limited to one (1) hour of physical activity per practice.

5.1.3. The U4, U5, U6, & U8 shall be limited to maximum of forty-five (45) minutes of physical activity per practice.

5.1.4. Coaches, Assistant Coaches, or Team Managers may not engage in any special training sessions with individuals or partial teams in addition to the above specified practice sessions. The only exception shall be in the case of a parent working individually with his own child or the case of special clinics after receiving the Age Group Director's permission.

### **5.2. Games**

5.2.1. Each player has equal opportunity to develop their abilities and skills, learn teamwork and sportsmanship; RYSA requires that each RYSA Player be played a minimum of 50% in every game, except for illness, injury or disciplinary reasons. In the cases of injury, the coach must notify the player, the parents of the player, and the opposing coach prior to the beginning of the game that the minimum time has been reduced. In the cases of disciplinary reasons, the coach must first obtain approval from their Age Group Director. Then, prior to the beginning of the game in which time is to be reduced, the coach must notify the player, the parent(s) of the player, referee, and the opposing coach that the minimum time has been reduced (non-attendance at practice and nonpayment of fees may be cause for disciplinary action). Discipline should be reserved for extreme instances of attendance problems or failure to pay and not for the occasional missed or late arrival to practice.

5.2.2. Each Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager must inform the player's legal guardians concerning the mandatory playing time statement on the registration forms before the legal guardians' sign the registration form.

5.2.3. Each rostered Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager that remains in the coaches' box or with the players by or near the players' bench must have their RYSA issued ID badge, valid and applicable for the current season, visibly displayed throughout the entirety of the game to be allowed to remain with the players. If none is visibly displayed, this person will be considered a spectator and summarily asked to move to the spectator side by either a referee, RYSA staff or Board Member.

5.2.4. RYSA strongly supports the minimum playing time as required by the rules of NTSSA. Parents of players who are not given minimum playing time and a plausible explanation may contact the Age Group Director. Acceptable contact would be in written form.



5.2.5. If the situation is not resolved with the Age Group Director, then the parent needs to notify, in writing, the Board in care of the A&D Chairman.

5.2.6. Failure of a Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager to abide by this rule constitutes grounds for suspension. An A&D hearing must be held prior to revocation of RYSA's invitation to a participating coach in the Association.

5.2.7. In youth recreational tournaments, each player is required to play a minimum of 50% of each game, including overtime. All players on a team must be invited to each tournament in which the team participates.

5.2.8. In the event of uniform color conflict, the Home team will be required to change to an alternate jersey color. In the event the Home team refuses or is unable to comply with this requirement the game will be considered a forfeit with corresponding points awarded to the visiting team. The referee does not have the authority to force the visiting team to use an alternate colored jersey.

5.2.9. Age Group Directors will be responsible for creating team schedules.

5.2.9.1 Action will be taken to prevent schedule conflicts for teams whose Head Coach has multiple teams within RYSA. Taking into consideration the time it will take for the coach to change fields in the case of an inter-league away game.

5.2.9.2. Action will be taken when creating game schedules to avoid scheduling games that will prevent conflicts with RYSA league events. To allow as many RYSA players and their families to attend the event without compromise.

5.2.9.3. Once team schedules are published they shall stand without change for the duration of the season, unless the scheduled game meets the requirements to postpone said game as stated in Rules section 5.3.

5.2.9.4. If a team is unable to play their scheduled game for reasons that do not meet those stated in Rules section 5.3, the game shall be forfeited.

5.2.9.5. When scheduling the second round of head-to-head games for a division that has inter-league teams, all RYSA teams shall be scheduled to play all other RYSA teams a second time before they are scheduled to play any Inter-league team a second time. This is to only be accomplished using an automated system with filters to insure randomness.

### **5.3. Postponed Games**

#### **5.3.1. Weather**

5.3.1.1. The RYSA Fields and Equipment Director has been given responsibility and authority to control access to the playing fields in the event of inclement weather.

5.3.1.2. Coaches can call the "Rain Out Number" or refer to RYSA website for the status of the game. Parents are requested to contact their coach or check the website, and to not call the Rain Out Number.

5.3.1.3. The referee has final authority to postpone a specific game due to threatening weather or poor field conditions. If games are postponed due to threatening weather either by the referee or a RYSA board member the fields are to be considered closed until further notice.

5.3.1.4. A game called because of weather prior to the fifth (5th) minute of the second (2nd) half shall be replayed and both teams will start scoreless in the makeup game. Referees shall adhere to the time allocated for half time and punctually start the second (2nd) half.

5.3.1.5. A game postponed due to weather after five (5) minutes of the second (2nd) half shall stand as an official game.

5.3.1.6. Championship playoffs and Cup Tournament finals will be replayed regardless of elapsed time (except as noted). If circumstances dictate that a Championship playoff or Cup Tournament final game cannot be rescheduled; the winner shall be determined by the flip of a coin.

### **5.3.2. Referee "No-Show"**

5.3.2.1. A game shall be considered postponed if the referee is not at the field within thirty (30) minutes of the scheduled game time unless it is known that he/she is held up by an earlier game still in progress. The home team shall notify the Age Group Director who reschedules the game.

### **5.3.3. RYSA Events**

5.3.3.1. A RYSA Event shall be defined as any event promoted and scheduled by RYSA for the involvement of RYSA players. RYSA season games and tournaments shall be defined as a RYSA Event. Events that are promotions for other organizations that include one or more of the following: they take place on RYSA fields, they include RYSA personnel overseeing aspects of the event, or they are organized by RYSA for the inclusion of all registered RYSA players, shall be considered a RYSA Special Event.

5.3.3.2 In situations where players and teams are involved in RYSA events that conflict, a head coach may request that game postponement to resolve the conflict. The opposing head coach has to approve of the reschedule.

### **5.3.4. Abandonment by Referee**

5.3.4.1. Final disposition and score shall be decided by an A&D Committee.

## **5.4. Game Reports**

5.4.1. Game reports are the official records of any game played and as such, shall constitute the information of record in any game appeal or A&D hearing.

5.4.2. Game reports shall include the following:

- Game particulars (teams, score, date, time, etc.).
- A realistic referee appraisal.
- A referee(s) signature

5.4.3. Any Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager having serious objections to the performance of a referee may register a formal complaint with the Board. The complaint must be in writing, stating all game particulars (teams, field, day, time, etc.) and report specific instances of referee performance or impropriety. Generalization or personality conflicts will not be addressed. Such complaints must be submitted within 72 hours of the game in question.

## **5.5. Standings**

5.5.1. League standings will not be kept for the U4, U5, U6, and U8.

5.5.2. The standings of all games will be based on game results that have been posted via the website.

5.5.2.1 If scores are not entered within the 72 hours after a game is played, RYSA has the right to deduct 1 point per day from the team's point total.

5.5.3. RYSA will utilize the following method in determining the League standings:

Game Points: RYSA will use a three (3) point scoring system. A team receives three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie, and zero (0) points for a loss. If two (2) teams are tied at the end of the regular season, the first tie breaker is head to head competition. If a tie still remains, the two teams shall have a play-off game to decide the winner. In the event more than two (2) teams are tied, those teams involved shall play a round-robin type tournament. Each team playing all other teams involved. The team with the best record in this tournament shall be declared the winner.

5.5.4. If a team forfeits a game, it shall be recorded as a 3-0 "win" for the other team.

5.5.5. If a team drops from the division during a season, all remaining games for that team will be recorded as forfeits.

5.5.6. A team that forfeits a game due to non-appearance must pay the referee fees prior to the next scheduled league game. If the forfeiting team has not notified the Age Group Director, verbally, 24 hours prior to that scheduled game of their intent to forfeit, a fine of \$25 will be applied in addition to the referee fees.

5.5.7. A team that forfeits three (3) or more games in a soccer year may be disbanded at RYSA discretion.

## **5.6. Awards**

5.6.1. RYSA will provide participation awards to each player in the U4, U5, U6, U8 teams to recognize the player.

5.6.2. RYSA shall provide placement trophies for those teams in the top 50% not to exceed more than three places of their division in the under 10 and above divisions.

5.6.3. In the event of ties in the league standings. The official tie-breaker procedure is as follows:

5.6.3.1. Head-to-Head Competition: If one game was played between the two teams, the winner claims the higher position in the standings. If they tied, or split two games, then:

5.6.3.2. Win-loss record for the season based on points: Three (3) points are given for a win, one (1) for a tie, and zero (0) points for a loss. The team with the better win-loss record is the winner. In the event of equal records, then:

5.6.3.3. Fewest number of disciplinary points: (e.g. from yellow cards, red cards). If tied then:

5.6.3.4. Play-off or Coin Flip:

5.6.3.4.1. If the teams are tied for first place (only), a play-off game to determine the winner will be scheduled by the Director.

5.6.3.4.2. If the teams are still tied at the end of regulation play, both teams shall play two (2) ten (10) minute overtimes with a two (2) minute interval between periods.

5.6.3.4.3. If both teams are still tied after overtime, then both teams will participate in a shootout with five (5) players taken from the players last on the field at the end of overtime from each team.

5.6.3.4.4. If still tied after the shootout, those players who scored in the shootout shall conduct another round.

5.6.3.4.5. If still tied, both teams shall be awarded first (1st) place trophies.

5.6.3.4.6. If the teams are tied for any other position in standings, the tie shall be broken with a coin flip. The coin flip will be conducted by the Age Group Director with both coaches present. If the coin flip cannot be conducted by the Age Group Director because of unavailability of the coaches after two (2) attempts to get the coaches together, then the coin flip will be conducted at the next scheduled board meeting. The coin flip will be conducted by the Age Group Director and the President and Vice President of Operations of RYSA or their active representative.

## **5.7. League Division**

5.7.1. Any age group division consisting of a large number of teams may choose to form subdivisions for ease of scheduling, separating teams of widely divergent skill levels, etc. Such a practice is strictly at the option of the Age Group Director.

5.7.2. Season closing ceremonies may be held on RYSA fields if approved by the Age Group Director.

## **5.8. Facilities**

5.8.1. RYSA has an agreement with the Rowlett Parks and Recreation Department for the usage of the Rowlett Community Park (RCP) soccer complex.

5.8.2. Practice sessions are not allowed at the Community Park fields without the expressed authorization of the Board or written notice of the Age Group Director. Violation of this rule is subject to a \$50 fine, which must be paid prior to the team's next scheduled game. When field conditions and usage requirements warrant, the Board may choose to permit exhibition or practice games on RYSA fields. These games will require both teams to be in full uniforms and the use of a licensed referee in uniform. The referee pay is the responsibility of the teams. A user fee can be assessed for the use of the fields at the discretion of the Board.

### **5.8.3. Team/Coach/Spectator Seating**

- The home team, coaches and players shall occupy the player bench of their choice, the visiting team shall occupy the opposite player bench. Only rostered players and coaches are allowed on this side of the field. Each team's spectators shall occupy the bleachers / spectator area directly across the field from their team.

5.8.4. All spectators and coaches must remain on their respective sides of the field. Coaches and players must remain one (1) yard behind the touchline. Spectators must remain behind the spectator line during the game.

5.8.5. Each Coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Manager is responsible for the proper disposition of trash on his or her side of the field at the end of the game.

## **5.9. Referee Fees**

5.9.1. Referee fees must be paid prior to each game. In the case of rescheduled games that occur due to weather postponement (as it pertains to rule 5.3.1.), the association is responsible for referee fees.

5.9.2. In the event a full referee crew does not officiate a game, referee fees will be paid to the official(s) present.

## 6. Conduct Expectations

### 6.1. Conduct

6.1.1. Conduct of the Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, players, parents or spectators is required to be of high caliber when such individuals are participating in NTSSA or RYSA sponsored events, either directly or indirectly.

6.1.2. Any misconduct including, but not limited to profanity, abusive language, and/or obscene gestures shall be dealt with in a decisive manner in accordance with RYSA regulations, NTSSA Rules and Regulations 3.11 Rule XI "Discipline" and/or the City of Rowlett, as may be appropriate.

### 6.2. Misconduct

6.2.1. RYSA Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, players, and spectators are expected to act and teach in sportsmanlike and ethical manner.

6.2.2. Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, (registered or not), parents or spectators if determined to be disruptive, may be ejected from the fields by a member of the Board. In addition, in the absence of a member of the RYSA Board, the head referee may insist on the removal of the disruptive party prior to resuming the game. If the request for removal from the field by the head referee is not honored, or if the ejected person returns to the field while the referee is still vicinity, the offending team will forfeit the game and it will result in a 3 – 0 loss.

6.2.3. Any Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager, player, or spectator suspected of unsportsmanlike or unethical conduct must appear before the RYSA A&D Committee. If found guilty, the individual(s) may be reprimanded, restricted from coaching, or suspended for some specified period or number of games, depending on the severity of the incident.

6.2.4. Cautions to, or ejections of, Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, players, or spectators issued by the referee shall be dealt with in the following manner as a minimum:

6.2.4.1. Cautions (Yellow Card): The accumulation of three (3) cautions in any year shall require a one game suspension; that being the next scheduled game actually played by the team. Suspensions will be carried forward to the next season if necessary. No appeal shall be allowed under this system.

6.2.4.2. Ejection (Red Card): Automatic one (1) game suspension, that being the next scheduled game actually played by the team. Suspensions will be carried forward to the next playing season if necessary. No appeal shall be allowed under this system.

6.2.5. Violent conduct by a Coach, Assistant Coach (registered or not) or Team Manager may result in additional penalties up to and including lifetime suspension.

6.2.6. Each RYSA Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager is responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators. The referee shall have the authority to caution and/or send off the coach from the field for the misconduct of the spectators associated with the team. If he/she is unable to do so, he/she is to immediately notify the RYSA Age Group Director so that appropriate action can be taken toward the identifiable player or spectator, or if unidentifiable, towards the team itself, RYSA will forward a report to the State A&D Committee for review and further action if, it is warranted.

6.2.7. Misconduct involving any participant (player, coach, parent/spectator) at State sponsored games, as opposed to RYSA league play, will be reported to the Tournament officials of the State Cup and Games Committee and will be forwarded to the State A&D Committee immediately after the occurrence for appropriate disciplinary action.

6.2.8. NTSSA has exclusive jurisdiction over assault or abuse of officials, both referee and linesmen, in any competition by the State or RYSA. This jurisdiction includes:

6.2.8.1. All USSF registered referees (adult and youth).

6.2.8.2. Any non-licensed person serving in any emergency capacity as a game official.

6.2.8.3. Any coach, parent or junior linesman serving as a game official.

6.2.9. If there is an assault/abuse of any game official by any person, including players, coaches, managers or spectators; a report of the alleged assault/abuse will be submitted to the appropriate State Commissioner and the Executive Vice President, A&D Committee Chairman, Olympic Development Program Chairman and the Chairman of the State Referee Committee. This subcommittee, chaired by the appropriate commissioner, shall review and investigate the report(s) as submitted, and upon proper investigation shall determine the seriousness of the alleged assault/abuse report(s) in a timely manner.

6.2.10. Referee assault includes but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, punching, choking, spitting at or on, grabbing bodily, running into the referee; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee's uniform or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.

6.2.11. Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act that implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment. Abuse includes but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee; using foul or abusive language toward a referee; spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property; or verbally threatening a referee. Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as, "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece", shall be deemed referee abuse.

### 6.3. Misconduct at a Referee

6.3.1. Should the North Texas subcommittee, as noted in paragraph 3.11.7, sub paragraph 2 of the **NTSSA Bylaws and Rules**<sup>1</sup>, determine the action as misconduct at a referee but less than abuse or assault, it shall impose not less than a three (3) game suspension. A formal hearing will not be held unless it is requested.

6.3.2. Misconduct at a referee means persistent statements or physical acts directed toward a referee during or after a game, that do not constitute referee assault or abuse as provided under **USSF Policy 531-9**<sup>2</sup>, but that mistreat the referee or are inappropriate or unacceptable statements or acts, and may include the following:

- Excessive incidences of foul or abusive language at the referee;
- Statements that diminish the authority of the referee; Statements or acts that serve to intimidate without threatening physical harm to the referee.

**Examples of misconduct that arise under the description above include the following:**

- Confronting the referee without physically threatening the referee;
- Spitting on the ground or in the air but not at the referee;
- Throwing or kicking an item as a sign of disrespect or dissent but without the chance of hitting the referee;
- Re-entering the field.

These are only some of the examples of possible misconduct and are not all inclusive, but apply only in the following situations:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://usys-assets.ae-admin.com/assets/989/15/2018-2019%20NTSSA%20Bylaws%20and%20Rules.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ussoccer.com/~media/files/governance/2018/20180817-2018-19-bylaw-book.pdf?la=en>



- If a proceeding is brought against an individual for referee assault or abuse or both, under **USSF Policy 531-9**; or
- If the individual is ejected from a game and, after the ejection, engages in conduct that is misconduct under this policy.
- If the individual is found to have committed misconduct under this policy, he shall be suspended at least the next three (3) scheduled games. This suspension is in addition to any other suspension and/or fine that may be imposed on the individual by an association or league.

#### **6.4. Misconduct of Referees**

When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward any participant or spectator of a match, the State Executive Committee will hear such allegations and assess punishment concerning the referee in regard to his activities.

## 7. Authority

### 7.1. General

7.1.1. All members and participants in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of the North Texas Soccer Association have requested to participate in our programs. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of NTSSA, RYSA, as well as those of the United States Soccer Federation and its respective Youth and Senior Divisions. The NTSSA Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws provide that it has jurisdiction over all Member Associations, players, coaches, team managers, administrators and referees who choose to affiliate.

7.1.2. RYSA has been directed to form their own Appeals and Disciplinary Committees and to hold hearings - with the Parties having the right to be present. The A&D committee will review all card reports and misconduct by players, coaches, assistant coaches, parents and spectators. The A&D committee will call hearings at its discretion. Hearings will normally be held for the ejection of a player, the caution or ejection of a coach/assistant coach and any misconduct by a parent or spectator. All Member Playing Associations are required to furnish the NTSSA State Office with a maintained up-to-date list of their A&D Chairman and Committee members and to include their addresses and phone numbers.

7.1.3. RYSA will not hesitate to deny teams, coaches, managers, team representatives or players within its jurisdiction the privilege of further participation in all or selected soccer activities within its jurisdiction for repeated offenses and for serious offenses considered to bring the game into disrepute. A probation period and/or other sanctions may be rendered to teams, coaches, managers, team representatives or players for violation of this rule.

7.1.4. RYSA does hold the team and coach jointly responsible for the conduct of his or her players, parents and spectators.

7.1.5 RYSA has the authority to temporarily deem any badged individual ineligible to coach pending a hearing when the individual has been accused of misconduct under RYSA Rules 6.2 Misconduct and 6.3 Misconduct at a Referee. In order to promote a safe working environment for game officials, individuals found in violation of the following, but not limited to: misconduct toward a game official causing the official to feel threatened and promoting violent and unsportsmanlike play, shall be deemed ineligible. The VP of A&D will investigate any formal complaint. If the complaint is substantiated, the RYSA Board of Directors have the authority to vote to determine whether the coach should be considered ineligible to coach pending a hearing. If the coach is found guilty of the charges after a hearing, the coach may apply the games that he/she has already sat out to the determined punishment.

## **7.2. Appellate Procedures**

7.2.1. All those under the jurisdiction of NTSSA are reminded that they must exhaust all appellate procedures of RYSA on all matters not covered by these Rules before the State Association can acquire jurisdiction to hear the appeal under its rules.

7.2.2. RYSA may set rules of hearings and may restrict the number of witnesses, and time allotted to each, so long as fair hearings are held. It may also determine whether it wants to allow closed or open hearings.

7.2.3. RYSA and its committees will refuse to hear any appeal when any person is threatening a lawsuit. The appeal will be passed to the next higher forum, which would hear it. This is a sport to which we are giving freely of our time, and none of us needs to take the trouble and expense to appear in court.

7.2.4. Should any aggrieved party resort to the courts without exhausting all avenues of appeal including through to the USSF, the State Association may, at its discretion, suspend such person or refuse to accept further registration in soccer activities within its jurisdiction.

7.2.5. An appeal of decisions, pursuant to **NTSSA Bylaws and Rules 3.11.9**, made by RYSA, after RYSA appeal procedures have been exhausted, will be made to the State A&D Committee in accordance with procedures established by this section.

7.2.6. An appeal of decisions made by the State A&D Committee will be made to the State Executive Committee in accordance with procedures established in this section.

7.2.7. An appeal of decisions presented to the NTSSA will be in writing and made to the General Manager of NTSSA within five (5) days of receipt of written notice of the lower level authority's decision(s). Fees, as specified, will be in cash or certified check and will accompany the written notice of appeal.

7.2.8. Filing fees for appeals will, under no circumstances, be waived. Fees will be refunded to the appealing party only if the previous decision is overruled.

## **7.3. Appeals and Disciplinary Committee**

7.3.1. NTSSA has urged all members associations and their committees to REFUSE to hear any protest or appeal when any person is threatening lawsuit. The matter will be directed to NTSSA. The use of tape recorders, court reporters and the presence of attorney at RYSA and NTSSA will not be permitted.

7.3.2. The Appeals and Disciplinary Committee is responsible for the investigating, hearing and disposing of in an equitable manner, all matters that are contrary to the Bylaws and Rules of the Association. All players, coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, parents, spectators, administrators, and others who are registered in RYSA and/or participate in soccer activities within the jurisdiction of Rowlett Youth Soccer Association shall abide by the Bylaws and Rules of Rowlett Youth Soccer Association and will be subject to the decisions made by the RYSA A&D Committee.

7.3.3. Upon receipt of written notification, the A&D Committee shall conduct a confidential investigation of questioning any person with first-hand knowledge of the facts. The investigation must include an interview with the accused unless it can be determined no further action, including the preferring of the charge(s) is necessary or warranted. For the protection of parties who may be innocent, the investigation will avoid revealing details as much as possible.

7.3.4. If necessary, the Committee will prepare the charge(s) that will be brought against the accused and the specifications(s) that will be addressed by the Committee.

7.3.4.1. The charge(s) sets forth the "offense" of which the accused is alleged to be guilty.

7.3.4.2. The specification(s) states "what" the accused is alleged to have done.

7.3.4.3. Notification of the Charge(s).

7.3.5. The accused is to be notified by mail with a letter notifying them of the date, hour, and place of the A&D hearing, containing an exact copy of the charge(s) and specification(s) and the statement "And is hereby cited to appear" at this meeting. The Committee chairman shall retain a copy of this notification. A copy of this notification shall be mailed to the division Director.

7.3.6. The Procedure of the A&D hearing will be as follows:

7.3.6.1. The hearing will be called to order by the Chairman.

7.3.6.2. The Chairman will read the charge(s) and specification(s).

7.3.6.3. The Chairman will provide copies of all documents to all participants.

7.3.6.4. The Chairman will advise all participants of the decorum of the hearing and it shall be maintained.

7.3.6.5. The Chairman will inform the participants of the time allotted for each phase of the hearing and will call upon.

7.3.6.6. The Appellant's, making charge, opening statement.

7.3.6.7. The Appellee's, being charged, opening statement.

7.3.6.8. The Appellant for presentation of argument, calling of witnesses and cross examination of Appellee through the Chairman.

7.3.6.9. The Appellee for presentation of argument, calling of witnesses and cross examination of Appellant through the Chairman.

7.3.6.10. The Committee members for cross-examination of the Appellee and Appellant.

7.3.6.11. The Appellant for a closing statement.

7.3.6.12. The Appellee for a closing statement.

7.3.7. The Chairman then states the question on the findings as to the guilt of the Appellee as prescribed in the charge(s) and specification(s) as preferred against the Appellee.

7.3.8. The charge(s) and specifications(s) can be amended to conform to facts brought out in the hearing, but not in such a way as to find the Appellee guilty of a charge(s) for which he has not been tried.

7.3.9. Each of the Specifications, and then the charge, is read, opened to debate, and voted on separately. If the Appellee is found guilty of one or more of the specifications but not of the charge, a lesser charge should be moved and voted on.

7.3.10. If the Appellee is found guilty, the Chairman announces that the next item of business is the determination of the penalty.

7.3.11. A Committee member shall make the determination of the penalty in the form of a motion. This motion is debatable and amendable by other Committee members. The Committee members shall take a Vote on this motion for penalty and the Chairman shall record the results of the vote.

7.3.12. If the Appellee is found guilty of a violation that states a specific penalty to be imposed, the Committee may enforce the prescribed penalty and/or additional penalties that the Committee feels are warranted based upon the severity of the violation as revealed in the Committee hearing.

7.3.13. If the Appellee is found not guilty, the Chairman shall record the findings and the Appellee shall be declared so.

#### **7.4. A&D Appellate Procedures:**

7.4.1. Any coach or player may appeal an A&D Committee finding to the Board by the following:

7.4.1.1. File a written notice with the RYSA registrar within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of written notification of the A&D Committee ruling.

7.4.1.2. Include a \$50.00 deposit which will be refunded only if the Board overturns the ruling by the A&D Committee.

7.4.2. Upon receipt of the written notice, the board shall schedule the time and place of the hearing for the appeal of the A&D ruling. The Board shall immediately notify the following:

7.4.2.1. The coach of the team or individual(s) against or for whom the appeal is filed.

7.4.2.2. The Chairman and members of the A& D Committee, none of which will have a vote in the appellate procedure or be present during closed deliberation.

7.4.3. Any coach or player may appeal a finding of the Board to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee of NTSSA as prescribed by NTSSA Rules.

## **7.5. Violations**

7.5.1. Upon written receipt of an alleged violation of the Bylaws and/or rules the A&D Committee procedures shall be followed.

7.5.2. A coach, player, spectator, Board Member, or any other member of the Association that is found guilty of violating the rules and/or Bylaws of NTSSA or RYSA shall be penalized the prescribed penalty, if stated, and/or any additional penalty imposed by the A&D Committee.

## **7.6. Suspension**

7.6.1. Suspension must be served even if carried over to the next season. A player or coach under suspension who chooses to not participate in a season must fulfill that suspension in the season in which he returns to active participation.

7.6.2. RYSA requires that a suspended coach may not appear at the soccer complex while under suspension.

7.6.3. Players: RYSA requires that a suspended player may appear at the soccer complex only so long as he is not wearing any part of his uniform.

7.6.4. Team: A team must forfeit any game that a coach or player participates in if the coach or player is under suspension. The violation of the suspension will be submitted to the A&D Committee for further action.

## **7.7. Game Protest**

7.7.1. There are only two acceptable causes for the protesting of a game after it has been played. They are:

7.7.1.1. A team knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible or suspended player.

7.7.1.2. There has been an obvious error made in the Laws of the Game by the referee, and the referee admits it.

7.7.2. No protests are allowed which are based on referee judgment decisions (NTSSA and USSF rules).

7.7.3. A protest may be lodged with the referee regarding the grounds, goal post or other appurtenances of the game provided such protest is lodged before the game begins.

7.7.4. The referee may require the home team to remove the cause of the objection.

7.7.5. If the objection remains, the coach may write a brief protest and submit it to the referee prior to fielding his team.

7.7.6. At the conclusion of the game, the referee shall note the fact of the pre-game protest on the game report, sign the written protest, returning it to the coach.

7.7.7. The coach must formally submit the protest in writing to RYSA even if his team won the match.

7.7.8. A coach may remove his team from the field of play before time has expired by informing the referee of his intention during a stoppage in the game. A coach who does remove his team from the field automatically forfeits the game and must submit a written report of reason for abandoning the game to the A&D Committee within seven (7) days.

7.7.9. A protest can be made if there is a valid reason for the protest. Leaving the field of play without notifying the referee is a cautionable offense.

7.7.10. All protests of a game due to player or referee errors must be:

7.7.10.1. Made in writing

7.7.10.2. Submitted to a RYSA Officer within five (5) calendar days.

7.7.10.3. Protest will not be allowed in the Under 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 leagues.

7.7.10.4. Accompanied by a fee of \$50.00

7.7.11. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned and the A&D Committee hearing the protest will decide if the game should be replayed based on the effect of the error on the outcome of the game.



## 8. Amendments

8.1. By a majority vote of the members present and voting at any meeting duly called for that purpose, providing notice of the meeting and the proposed amendments have been given to the members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

8.2. By a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at any regular meeting of the members provided that a majority of the total membership is present and that notice of the meeting has been given at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

8.3. Amendments shall become effective upon adoption.

8.4. Rule changes adopted by NTSSA shall be included in RYSA rules by a review of the Board of Directors (does not require a vote of the members).

8.5. General “housekeeping” shall be included in RYSA rules by a review of the Board (does not require a vote of the membership). “Housekeeping” is defined as routine tasks necessary for grammatical, punctuation, removal of deprecated or duplicated information, structure, conflicts in narrative, and/or formatting that does not eliminate the core principle of the rules as whole. These types of changes shall be communicated to the membership at the next general meeting.