

ECYSA

ESSEX COUNTY YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



OPERATING RULES FOR COACHES

Spring 2026

www.ecysa.org

Updated March 2026

PLEASE REFER TO THE RULES ONLINE FOR ANY UPDATES

Essex County Youth Soccer Association (ECYSA or “the league”) does not discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or gender dysphoria and is committed to the highest standards of sportsmanship at all events and at all levels of youth soccer.

ECYSA’s Board of Directors reserves the right to invoke disciplinary authority over members that violate ECYSA operational rules as stated henceforth.

Discipline includes, but is not limited to imposing fines, cautioning, suspending, and banning of members (including players, coaches, parents, board officials and/or Member Organizations) that have violated ECYSA operational rules.

This applies to ECYSA regularly scheduled seasons, ECYSA tournaments, ECYSA sanctioned events and any games/events where the members are representing ECYSA.

ECYSA adheres to United States Soccer Federation (USSF) rules and guidelines except as otherwise noted.

ECYSA has adopted sections of the Massachusetts Hazing Law (Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269 Sections 17, 18, and 19). This law was passed and enacted for educational institutions in the state of Massachusetts. Violating any of these laws carries harsh penalties of fines and/or imprisonment. Even though ECYSA does not have the jurisdiction to oversee each and every member organization, ECYSA will not tolerate any hazing or bullying activities. The term “hazing” means any conduct or method of initiation into any Member Organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any participant or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, forced exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health of any such participant or other person, or which subjects such participant or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

ECYSA has adopted the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Codes of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy, as currently posted on the MYSA website and on the ECYSA website.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
I. SCHEDULING	4
A. General	4
B. Games not played as scheduled	4
C. General Rules	7
D. Exceptions for G4 Games	14
E. Exceptions for G6 Games	15
F. Communication Guidelines	17
II. DISCIPLINE	17
A. Overview	17
B. Cards & Card Points	17
C. Disciplinary Process	19
D. Ejections	20
E. Conditions of Forfeiture	21
F. Unbecoming Conduct	21
G. Referee Support & Control of Spectators	22
H. Protests	22
I. Protest Guidelines	22
J. Summary of Fees & Fines	23
K. ECYSA Lopsided Score Policy	23
L. Penalties for Spectator Behavior	24
III. REFEREES	24
A. Expectations for Referees	24
B. Referee Assignor	25
C. Reporting Time	25
D. Pre-Game Activities	25
E. Team Roster & Game Summary Card	26
F. Post-Game Activities	26
G. Unplayable Fields	26
H. Abandoned Games	26
I. Referee Fees & Fee Forfeiture	26
J. Referee Match Reports	27
IV. ECYSA CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT & POSTSEASON PLAY	27
A. ECYSA Championship Tournament Director	27
B. Tournament Schedule	27
C. Qualification & Seeding	28
D. Rosters	28
E. Competition	29
F. Player Injuries & First Aid during Playoffs	30
G. Massachusetts Tournament of Champions	30
H. ECYSA Tournament Brackets	31
I. Tournament Weather Rules	31
V. COACH'S ELIGIBILITY	31
VI. ECYSA PLAYER PASS INSTRUCTIONS	32
VII. Language Incidents or Discriminatory Acts Response Guidelines	32
VIII. Pregame Sportsmanship Announcement	32
IX. Respect the Call Policy (531-9)	33

I. Scheduling

A. General

1. ECYSA shall develop, publish, and maintain a Schedule of matches for each season.
2. ECYSA will make every effort to ensure that all scheduled matches are played. If for any reason a scheduled match is not played in its entirety as published, then all parties shall make every effort to ensure that said match is rescheduled per the policies, guidelines, and processes below.
3. There shall be no changes or alterations to the published schedule unless approved by ECYSA through the reschedule process.
4. If the scheduled field is declared unplayable, then the designated ECYSA official reserves the right to move games on the same day to an alternate field with 3 hours' notice. ECYSA shall notify both team coaches of such change no later than three hours prior to the originally published start time. Either posting the new field location on the website or a telephone call to the coach meets the requirements of notification. These games will not be addressed through the rainout tool or reschedule process.
5. ECYSA shall abide by Thunder and Lightning Policies as set forth by USYSA.

B. Games not played as Scheduled

Reschedules, Postponements, Cancellations, Abandonments, and any other games not played as scheduled for any reason.

1. Definition of terms.
 - a. An ABANDONED match is one that has been started but not completed. Resolution of game status will be determined by ECYSA. In general, if a game is not completed the game will be replayed from the beginning.
 - b. A POSTPONED match is one that has been scheduled yet not played and will not be played as originally scheduled; including weather related and other field closures, and referee no-shows.
 - c. A RESCHEDULED match is one that has undergone an approved change prior to the published schedule date and has received a new date, time, and/or location.
 - d. CANCELED match is one that is eliminated from the Published schedule, whether played or not played. Canceled matches will not be played or re-played. ECYSA may cancel a previously Forfeited match. Results from canceled matches will not be considered in the determination of group standings. The ECYSA Board of Directors may cancel a match at its sole and exclusive discretion, for any reason including but not limited to inclement weather, disciplinary action, referee availability, availability of one or both teams, field conditions, and field availability. ECYSA will make reasonable efforts to ensure that all matches in the published schedule are played. ECYSA does not guarantee that all published matches will be played.
2. Deadlines:
 - a) Reschedule request MUST be submitted by the Sunday (11:59 p.m.) prior to the scheduled match, for a game scheduled for Saturday or Sunday. For a game scheduled for another day of the week, the reschedule request must be submitted a week before the game, by 11:59 p.m. No new reschedule requests will be considered once past the deadline.

- b) For all other matches not played as scheduled, notification of details of a new date, time and location, must be submitted no later than one (1) week after the date on the original published schedule.
- c) All postponed and/or rescheduled matches may be played at any time during the season prior to the last Saturday of scheduled games as set forth in the published ECYSA Season Calendar.

3. Agreement

- a) In the case of a postponed match, both coaches should agree to the new date, time and location of the match. If the two coaches cannot agree within 7 days to a new date, time, and location, then ECYSA shall assign a date and time at the originally scheduled location on the Thursday evening following one week past the deadline for notification unless in the final week of the season, where the assigned date will be on a case by case basis as time allows.
- b) In the event that one or both teams are unable to play on the assigned date, ECYSA may, at their sole discretion, cancel the match or issue forfeit(s).
- c) In the event of a game reschedule assigned by ECYSA, the teams may submit a Coach Agreed Reschedule, all fees will be applied.

4. Fees

- a. Member Organizations will be charged the Reschedule Fee per the Fee Schedule for any Postponed or Rescheduled games.

5. Reschedule Criteria

- a. The only way to change or alter the official ECYSA Published schedule is with a Reschedule Request properly submitted to ECYSA via the web site.

Eligible Reschedule requests include:

- (1) Teams having less than the required minimum number of players due to:
 - a) A religious event
 - b) A school event (curricular)

Note: Required minimums for (a) & (b) are:

G4 7 players

G6 9 players

G8 and above 11 players

- c) Coach Agreed Reschedule (See Section II. B. 6. c. 1)
 - (2) Catastrophic Event
 - (3) Originally scheduled midweek placeholder games.
- b. All reschedule requests must be submitted to the ECYSA using procedures in section II.B.6 or II.B.6A. See below.
- c. Only ECYSA may change scheduled matches, through the approved procedures. ECYSA may grant waivers and exemptions as necessary to account for unforeseen circumstances in the quest to complete all scheduled matches.
- d. The referee assignor requires a minimum of 48 hours' notice for reschedules and will make every effort to provide referees for all rescheduled matches. Lack of an assigned referee in any case of a rescheduled game is NOT grounds for further postponement, and the teams shall be prepared to play the game without an assigned referee.

6. Reschedule Request Process, School or Religious Event, or Originally Scheduled Midweek Game, or Catastrophic Event

- a) The requesting coach and Travel Director must review above sections regarding Scheduling, ensuring that the request will meet the RESCHEDULE CRITERIA, for a school or religious event.

- b) The requesting Travel Director will submit individual requests for each game reschedule, even when a group of games are being rescheduled for the same reason (e.g. school/ religious event).
- c) The requesting Travel Director sends a request to ECYSA using the website, including all details for qualification under the criteria, no later than the Sunday at midnight prior to the scheduled start of a Saturday or Sunday game, or one week prior to a game on any other day of the week. ECYSA will reply to the requesting Travel Director, as well as the opponent's Travel Director. It is the TD's responsibility to communicate to the affected teams' coaches. If approved, the game as listed in the schedule WILL NOT take place. The opponent's coach has no say in the decision for a reschedule for a school or religious event. Only if the web site is down should the TD contact ECYSA via email.
- d) On occasion, the ECYSA BOD will preapprove certain religious holidays for possible reschedule. In these cases, notification should be made as early as possible to allow the referee assignor to adjust the referee schedule, but there must be at least one week's notice. If the reschedule policy is modified for these days, ECYSA will notify the league in advance of the season.
- e) If the request is DENIED, the game must be played as scheduled
- f) If a request for reschedule for a school or religious event is APPROVED:
 - 1) The requesting coach will contact the opposing coach to determine a mutually agreeable time and date.
 - 2) The home team coach will confirm field availability for the proposed date, time and location with the home Travel Director.
 - 3) The home Travel Director will initiate Game Change within the system, with all required information.
 - 4) ECYSA will confirm receipt of the request and validate the reschedule by reply to the Travel Directors for both teams, the Referee Assignor and the Grade Group Division Director.
 - 5) Both Travel Directors will notify their coaches of the approval of the reschedule.
- g) For a game originally scheduled for midweek, the presumption is that the game will be rescheduled to a date, time, and location agreed to by both teams. If the game can be held at the original date, time, and location, the teams and the travel directors shall confirm that fact and notify the grade group director and the referee assignor. Otherwise, the game shall be rescheduled pursuant to the process contained in this section 6.

6A) Reschedule Request Process, Coach Agreed Reschedule

- a. The coaches of a scheduled game may agree to reschedule a game. The coaches are expected to be reasonable and to agree to requests that are made with sufficient time in advance and sufficient reason.
- b. The coaches shall confer with their travel directors and determine a mutually agreed upon reschedule date / time.
- c. The travel director of the team initiating the reschedule shall submit the request with the new date / time (the travel director has ability to select home or away resource).
- d. Deadline to submit no later than the Sunday before kickoff (11:59PM), for a Saturday or Sunday game; one week before kickoff (11:59PM) for a game scheduled for another day of the week.
- e. The fee for a coach agreed reschedule shall be applied to the town organization of the initiating travel director. The fee is intended to be equivalent to the referee fee for that given grade group.
- f. The rescheduled game is to be played even if a referee is not assigned.
- g. The initiating TD submits the reschedule with updated date / time / resource, and the opposing TD shall review the request and approve / deny within 48 hours of submission.

- h. If Opposing TD approves, request is sent to ECYSA to approve and schedules are updated.
- i. ECYSA will reach out to the teams that play games before and after the game to be rescheduled, to determine if the teams are willing to move games to fill any gap. Teams are not required to agree.
- j. If Opposing TD denies the request, the game is to be played as scheduled. The Reschedule request can be resubmitted, as long as the deadline has not been passed.
- k. Games can be rescheduled more than once, but any reschedule of an already rescheduled game will result in fees being applied again.

7. The date, time and place for all rescheduled games, including night games, is subject to approval by ECYSA.

8. Postponement Process

- a) If a significant number of matches are not played, then the ECYSA Board of Directors may decide to move those matches to another date, time, and/or location.
- b) If it is impractical to reschedule these matches, then the ECYSA Board of Directors may cancel all scheduled matches for the impacted date. Matches that have been completed will be canceled and the results recorded as a “friendly” and not calculated into group standings. The canceled matches will not be rescheduled.
- c) Required actions in the event of a postponement:
 - i. For any match that is not played as scheduled, the home team coach shall enter a postponement on the ECYSA score report web page. The postponement may not be entered before the game’s scheduled starting time. The postponement must be entered no later than 48 hours after the scheduled starting time.
 - ii. The home team coach shall contact the opposing coach as soon as possible to discuss a new, mutually agreeable date and time to play the match.
 - iii. The home team coach will confirm field availability for the proposed date, time and location with the home Travel Director.
 - iv. The home Travel Director will submit a Game Change Form with all required information.
 - v. ECYSA will confirm receipt of the request and validate the reschedule by replying to the Travel Directors for both teams, the Referee Assignor and the Grade Group Division Director.
 - vi. Both Travel Directors will notify their coaches of the approval of the reschedule.

C. General Rules

1. Rules of the Game – IFAB/FIFA Laws of the Game shall be in effect, except as specifically stated otherwise in these rules.

2. Match Requirements

- a. A registered/affiliated coach with a valid ECYSA photo ID card and Valid Mass Youth Soccer Photo ID credentials must represent each team. Teams are required to arrive at the field to be ready to play at the scheduled start time. The referee shall delay the start of the match for a minimum of 15 minutes from the scheduled start time for a team or teams to appear with the specified minimum number of eligible and game legal players and coaches. Once the required minimum numbers of players and coaches (see section I.C.7) have arrived, the match must be started. There is no requirement to allow for warm-up or other preparation time.
- b. Voluntary Forfeitures. If a team knows in advance that it will have to forfeit a game, the coach (or other official team/ Member Organization representative) must notify the opposing coach, appropriate ECYSA Grade Group Division Director, and Referee Assignor at least 48

hours prior to game time, unless otherwise directed by an ECYSA official. Procedures for voluntary forfeiture are as follows:

- (1) Forfeiting coach (or other official team/ Member Organization representative) contacts opposing coach, appropriate ECYSA Grade Group Director & Referee Assignor notifying them of game forfeit (using the word "forfeit" in such communication).
 - (2) ECYSA Grade Group Division Director (or other ECYSA official) confirms this communication with forfeiting coach, forfeiting Travel Director, opposing coach, opposing Travel Director and ECYSA.
 - (3) Referee Assignor communicates to covering referee(s).
 - (4) Upon receiving confirmation from ECYSA Grade Group Division Director (or other ECYSA official) the opposing team need not appear at field to receive forfeiture win.
 - (5) If opposing team does not receive confirmation from ECYSA Grade Group Division Director (or other ECYSA official), they MUST appear at field, ready for play. Failure to appear will result in a forfeiture loss to both teams.
- c. Involuntary forfeiture. If a team is compelled to forfeit due to circumstances beyond their control, for example a player becomes injured during the course of a match and the team no longer has the minimum complement of players, the team will be issued a forfeit loss and the ECYSA Board of Directors will determine whether or not to assess a fine.
- d. Any team that fails to appear at the field for a scheduled game, without notifying the opposing coach, appropriate ECYSA Grade Group Division Director, and Referee Assignor at least 48 hours prior to game time, unless directed by an ECYSA official, will be assessed a forfeit loss for that game and will be fined per the ECYSA fine schedule. This is considered a No-Show. Two no- shows by a team may result in suspension of that team for remainder of the season.
- e. A team that forfeits the same day the game is scheduled, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, may be assessed fees to cover referee assignor's expenses.
- f. ECYSA Grade Group Directors will post forfeited games as zero (0) goals for the winning team and negative three (-3) goals for the losing team.

3. Team Uniforms – all ECYSA sanctioned events

a. Team Uniform Jerseys shall:

- (1) All shall be the same color. Member Organizations that are changing jersey styles may use both as long as the predominant colors are the same.
- (2) Have a minimum three (3) inch unique team number on the back. If there are duplicate numbers, other identification such as a name, permanent additional marking or tape that uniquely identifies the player can be used. Name or tape as a unique identifier is valid only for ECYSA sanctioned events and does not include MTOC.

b. SHIN GUARDS COMPLYING WITH USSF SPECIFICATIONS ARE MANDATORY FOR ALL PLAYERS AT ALL GRADE LEVELS. THE SHIN GUARDS MUST BE PROFESSIONALLY MANUFACTURED, BE GRADE/SIZE APPROPRIATE, NOT ALTERED IN ANY WAY, NOT HAVE ANY EXPOSED SHARP EDGES AND MUST BE PLACED UNDER THE SOCKS AND COMPLETELY COVERED. NO PLAYER WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ECYSA GAME WITHOUT SHINGUARDS.

c. All players with the exception of the goalkeeper shall have the same color shorts. All players with the exception of the goalkeeper shall have the same color socks.

d. Home team must change uniforms or wear different colored pinnies (practice vests) in the event of color conflict with the opponent, as determined by the referee.

e. The goalkeeper's shirt must be a different color than his/ her team's colors, the opponent's team colors, and the referee(s) color. Goalkeeper shirts need not be numbered. Goalkeepers from opposite teams may have the same color jersey. A contrasting pinnie may be used to distinguish the goalkeeper. If the goalkeeper is wearing different shorts/pants and socks

(as well as a different jersey or pinnie), he/she must change to a team uniform (shorts/pants/socks) meeting applicable field player requirements before playing as a field player.

f. Safe footwear must be worn at all times.

g. During wet and/or cold weather, the following provisions may apply: sweatshirts or jackets may be worn under the team jersey so as to expose the number and team color. Hoods must be tucked in beneath team jersey. Sweatpants must be worn over the shorts.

h. During hot weather, ECYSA may direct referees (or a referee may act on their own given the current conditions) to pause the game at the approximate midway point of each half. Substitutions are not permitted during this pause, unless the ball is already out of play, in which case regular substitution rules apply.

i. Players are not allowed to participate in any ECYSA match if they are wearing one or more of the following prohibited items:

(1) Jewelry including but not limited to rings, watches, earrings, necklaces, and bracelets;

(2) Hard or metallic hair control devices such as clips, barrettes, or bobby pins;

(3) Wrist sweatbands;

(4) Face masks and head gear that are not IFAB/FIFA approved (coaches, parents, and players who misrepresent IFAB/FIFA approvals to referees may face disciplinary action);

(5) Casts or splints, metal or other rigid material;

(6) Wrist braces with metal or hard plastic or other rigid inserts;

(7) Ornamental items such as ribbon or yarn not required for hair control or to secure medical data tags;

(8) Tape or covers intended to hide prohibited items (such action may also warrant a caution for unsporting behavior if the referee believes there is a deliberate attempt to deceive them).

j. Players are permitted to wear the following items provided the referee determines that they are not dangerous to the player, teammates, or opponents;

(1) Medical bracelets or necklaces that are taped to the body in a manner that secures them during the match;

(2) Soft hair control devices such as sweatbands without knots, yarn, rubber bands, and cloth ponytail holders. Players may play with hair adornments if they are secured, the referee must deem that they are not a safety issue;

(3) IFAB/FIFA approved head gear or head gear conforming to American Society for Testing and Materials Standard F2439 Standard Specification for Head Gear Used in Soccer;

(4) Knee braces free from exposed clips, sleeves are not required;

(5) Soft wrist braces without plastic or metal inserts;

(6) Ankle braces without sharp edges that are worn under the socks;

(7) Face masks prescribed for players to wear.

k. The referee is the final authority on whether a player's equipment including items listed in, or not listed in, sections III.C.3i and III.C.3j is safe.

4. Fields –

a. The playing field must meet IFAB/FIFA requirements except for special provisions for G4 and G6 play noted below.

b. Portable goal posts must be anchored securely to the ground. Nets should be used and be securely attached to the goal posts.

c. Any Member Organization that fails to properly anchor goal posts and secure nets at the start of a scheduled game shall be reported to the Appropriate ECYSA Vice-president and Grade Group Division Director by the visiting team.

d. The referee may refuse to officiate a game due to any field condition that they consider dangerous to the players (a net which is not secured is not considered a danger). The decision of whether or not to replay the match or issue a forfeit will be made by ECYSA or ECYSA Board

Member acting on their behalf after reviewing the circumstances.

e. After the match begins, the referee may abandon the match for deterioration of any field condition that they consider dangerous to the players. The decision of whether or not to replay the match or issue a forfeit will be made by ECYSA or ECYSA Board Member acting on their behalf after reviewing the circumstances.

f. ECYSA may inspect fields without notice. Fields not in compliance with IFAB/FIFA requirements as modified by ECYSA will be subject to a fine on a per field, not per condition, basis.

g. ECYSA may postpone, reschedule, or cancel any game(s) on any field(s) found to be in violation of IFAB/FIFA or ECYSA requirements.

h. Fields must be available for the entire time of the scheduled game. If a game is not completed due to lack of field availability, the home team may be awarded a forfeit loss. In situations where an unforeseen delay occurs such as a serious injury or weather, abandonment may not result in a forfeit.

i. There should be technical areas on one side of the field. Both teams must be on the side where the team's technical area is located. The technical area starts five (5) yards from the midfield line and is three (3) yards by ten (10) yards in size, and at least 1 yard off the touchline. The technical area must be painted on the field, or must be delineated by cones placed by the coaches.

j. Coaches must remain inside the limits of the technical area, on the sideline, during the game or face discipline pursuant to the LOTG. Coaches are required to remain within the boundaries described above, as painted on the field or as delineated by cones or by other physical means.

k. Spectators must be on the opposite side of the field from players and coaches and be a minimum of 3 feet from the touchline at all times. Spectators are not permitted behind either goal line or goal. Tactical Instruction from the spectator side is strictly forbidden, and may result in disciplinary action. Exceptions: 1) A field with stands/bleachers behind the team bench or goal/end line. 2) A field that does not have room for a spectator sideline. In this case, a town should establish a technical area per LOTG - Law 1 and set a 6 foot outer boundary for spectator viewing area. At all times, the referee has the authority to move spectators and establish a boundary for spectators per LOTG - Law 5.

5. Minimum Field Requirements.

ECYSA requires that each Member Organization provide adequate field space to accommodate their teams. For teams that play on Saturday, one (1) field is required for every ten teams registered. Fields must be available from 9:00 a.m. through 6:30 p.m. Sunday play requires one (1) field for every five (5) teams registered. Fields must be available from 1:00 p.m. through 7:00 p.m. Because of the inevitability of divisions containing bye games, each Member Organization must have a field available during the week. This field must be available from 6:00 p.m. through 8:00 p.m.

6. Unplayable Fields

a. For all G4, G6, and G8 games, the Home Team Travel Director shall input all games to be rained out using the website system. The rainout feature in the website system will be available 24 hours prior to game time, and will be disabled two hours prior to game time. The system will generate notices to all coaches, officials, and Travel Directors, and will automatically create a game reschedule request.

b. If a field is unplayable on Sunday for a G10 or PG game, the Hosting Travel Director must contact the Referee Assignor by telephone only (not email) and provide the number(s) of the field(s) being closed no later than 8 A.M.;

For all G10 or PG Games on days other than Sunday, the Hosting Travel Director shall call the

Referee Assignor no later than five hours before game time.

- c. For G10 and PG Games only, after contacting the Referee Assignor, the Hosting Travel Director shall take such steps to notify the teams as instructed by the Referee Assignor.
- d. If no decision has been made subject to Section III.C.6., then both teams must appear at the field, where the referee shall make the final decision on whether or not to play. Travel Directors always have the right to protect the condition of their fields. However, once the above deadlines have passed Travel Directors must do so through the referee. If only one team appears, the other team forfeits, regardless of any decision by the referee, the Travel Director, or the condition of the field.
- e. Abuses of the rules regarding unplayable fields will be disciplined.

7. Rosters & Player Cards - ONLY OFFICIAL ECYSA ROSTER FORMS WILL BE ALLOWED. Other than writing player numbers in the space provided, coaches may not alter the roster. The referee shall rule invalid a roster altered in any way, other than to add player numbers. No game shall be played unless both teams have conforming, unaltered rosters.

- a. No G8 or higher game may be started with less than seven (7) players per team.
- b. No G6 game may be started with less than six (6) players per team.
- c. No G4 game may be started with less than five (5) players per team.
- d. If any time the number of players drops to less than the minimums, the game will be temporarily suspended. If the number of players cannot be brought up to the minimum in a reasonable amount of time, the game shall be abandoned.
- e. Coaches will provide a completed, official, ECYSA roster to the referee prior to the start of the game. This roster will include:
 - (1) Player's names.
 - (2) Player's jersey number (handwritten if not preprinted).

If the preprinted roster is not presented prior to the start of the game, the referee will allow the coach 15 minutes to present it to the referee. If not presented by this time, the game is to be abandoned by the referee and the referee is required to send a report of the abandoned game to the league.

- f. Any effort by a coach, player, or spectator to persuade a referee to allow them to participate without proper credentials (coach card and/or player's name on the roster) is subject to disciplinary action.
- g. A coach may inspect the opposing team's roster once per game. The inspection may take place before the match or after the match, not during the match or at halftime (interval). The inspection shall not last more than five-minutes. The referee shall decide when the five-minute inspection period is complete.
- h. If a team does not meet the roster requirements of this section, ECYSA may fine the team's Member Organization an amount equal to the game forfeit fee.

8. Identification Cards and Rosters

- a. ECYSA issued team rosters must be given to the referee prior to all ECYSA games. Each Player must be listed on the roster to participate. Each coach must display their MYSA photo credential and ECYSA coach card to be able to coach. The referee will keep the roster until the end of the game. The referee must allow a delay of 15 minutes from the scheduled game start for team rosters and/or coach cards to arrive at the field.
- b. If one team is missing its roster, that team shall receive a forfeit loss. The team with its roster shall be granted a win. Should both teams be missing their rosters, both teams shall be awarded a forfeit loss.
- c. A referee shall not officiate a game where an entire team is missing their roster.

9. Playing Periods / Ball Size

Grade Group	Periods	Ball Size
G4	(2) 25	#4
G6	(2) 30	#4
G8	(2) 35	#5
G10	(2) 40	#5
G12PG	(2) 45	#5

- a. Official halftimes are 5 minutes long and times are to be kept only by the center referee.
- b. Games that are not played in their entirety must be replayed in their entirety.

10. Substitutions:

- a. All substitutions require permission of the referee.
- b. The number of times a player may be substituted is unlimited.
- c. With the exception of substitution for an injured player, there is no limit to the number of players who may be substituted at one time.
- d. Substitutions may take place at the following stoppages in play:
 - (1) Prior to a goal kick;
 - (2) After a goal by either team;
 - (3) Attendance to an injured player without issuance of a card. If an injured player is substituted, then the opposing team may substitute one player, providing the substitute is ready at midfield at the time of the injury.
 - (4) Prior to a throw-in, the team in possession may substitute. If the team in possession substitutes then, and only then, may the opposing team also substitute;
 - (5) At the interval (half-time)
 - (6) after a caution, the offending player may be substituted, at the discretion of the player's coach and the referee.
- e. Except for injuries and the interval, substitute players must enter the field at the halfway (midfield) line. Except for injuries, a goal, or the interval, substitute players must be at the halfway line (midfield) before play is stopped in order to be eligible for substitution. Players that are substituted for must leave the field at the halfway (midfield) line.
- f. The goalkeeper may be changed via substitute per the above. Also, the goalkeeper may be changed with any player on the field provided play is already stopped. Prior to any keeper change, the referee must be notified. The coach should get a confirmation of this notification from the referee.
- g. Players who have left the field, at the request of the referee, due to blood, jewelry or equipment problems must report to the referee for review upon re-entering the game as a substitute or the substitution may be deemed illegal and the player cautioned.
- h. A substitution is mandatory when a referee has stopped play to deal with an injury. The injured player, inclusive of the goalkeeper, is required to be substituted. If an injured player is substituted, then the opposing team may substitute one player, providing the substitute is ready at midfield at the time of the injury.

11. All Grade Group Game Score Reporting Responsibilities

- a. The Home coach:
 - (1) Will print from the online system a game score card showing the date of the game, both home/visitors Member Organization and team names, and the game number as printed on the schedule.

- (2) Will then provide the referee with the completely filled out game score card.
- b. The Home Team Coach or Team Representative must report the status of the game to their appropriate ECYSA Grade Group Director via the score reporting section of the ECYSA website at www.ecysa.org within two (2) days after playing the game by 9:00 P.M. (i.e. Saturday games must be reported by 9:00 PM Monday.) Results of the last game of the season must be reported on the day the game is played by 9:00 PM. If a game is not played as scheduled, it is still the home coach's responsibility to list the game as not played on the website.
- c. Coaches should take a picture of the game score card as filled out by the referee at the conclusion of the game, if they so desire. This game summary will have the final score, the referee's name and the game date/number. This could be important if there is a tiebreaker at the end of the season. If a mistake is found by one of the coaches, they should bring this to the attention of the referee. If the referee agrees that a mistake has been made, they must bring all parties together to make the correction. If that cannot be done, then a report must be written by the referee so the Referee Assignor/ECYSA Board can verify the correct score. If there is no certified referee, the Home Team Coach should complete and retain the game score card and allow the Visiting Team Coach to take a picture of the card.

12. Standings

- a. ECYSA shall maintain standings for each group in all divisions of all grade brackets except G4.
- b. Points shall be awarded as follows:
- (1) Three (3) points for a win.
- (2) One (1) point for a tie.
- (3) Zero (0) point for a loss or forfeit.
- c. Tiebreakers per ECYSA tournament rules.

13. Referee No-Shows

- a. In the event that no referee has been assigned to a match, or the assigned referee does not arrive within fifteen (15) Minutes after the scheduled kickoff, both coaches should make every effort to agree on an acting referee so that the match is played and counted as an official game. Once the coaches agree on an acting referee, the match shall be played to conclusion with that acting referee.
- b. If the referee or acting referee of a match with only one game official becomes injured and is forced to withdraw from the match, both teams' coaches should make every effort to agree on a replacement referee, who meets the requirements of this section, so that the match is played and counted as an official game.
- c. An acting referee must be an adult with valid MYSA credentials. In the younger Grade Groups, it is also possible to have a youth (under the age of 18) referee the game if that youth has experience, because a CORI check and adult credentials are not required. Any adult who serves as an acting referee must have with them their valid current MYSA credentials. An acting referee may also be an adult with a current USSF referee credential.
- d. Spectators and parent volunteers who are not registered with MYSA may not serve as an acting referee.
- e. In the event that both coaches cannot agree on an acting referee the game shall be postponed under Section I.B.6. The home coach shall notify their Travel Director who will notify the Appropriate ECYSA Grade Group Division Director and the Referee Assignor about the no-show referee or lack of an assigned referee, and the failure to agree on an acting referee.
- f. After the ECYSA Assignor has notified the home Travel Director that a referee will not be

provided by ECYSA, the Home Organization Travel Director may select a substitute referee who meets the requirements of this section.

g. In order for a match to be considered official, the name, Member Organization affiliation, address and phone number of the acting referee must be printed on the game card. The Home Coach must also report the game as provided in Section I.C.11 above, including in their game report the name, Member Organization affiliation, address, and phone number of the acting referee.

14. Team Captain Rule Not Adopted by ECYSA

ECYSA has not adopted FIFA LOTG Law 3, paragraph 10, as to "Team Captain", and has not adopted the "Only the Captain" guidelines contained in the LOTG.

D. Exceptions for G4 Games

1. G4 Grade Group shall play Seven vs. Seven (7 v 7).

2. G4 soccer is a non-pressure, non-results orientated, instructional form of soccer whose purpose is to provide a FUN atmosphere and a positive playing experience for the children participating. All participants win when Coaches, Parents, Referees, and Players enjoy the game. IFAB/FIFA Laws shall apply with the following exceptions.

3. The Field of Play

a. Recommended minimum of 35 yards by 45 yards, not to exceed 45 yards by 60 yards.

b. Markings needed:

(1) Goal lines and Touchlines.

(2) Goal area 18 yards on the Goal line. 6 yards onto the playing field.

(3) A 14-yard line parallel to the Goal line running from touchline to touchline (not to be called penalty area). A Goalkeeper can handle the ball anywhere in this area.

(4) Halfway line and Center circle (8-yard radius).

(5) Corner Flag and corner quarter circles.

(6) Goal sizes 6 feet high and from 12 feet to 18 feet wide (12 feet is the preferred size).

(7) Mid-field flag (optional).

4. The ball size that will be used will be a number 4.

5. Seven (7) players including the Goalkeeper shall be on the field for each team. A team will play with no less than five (5) players. If at any time the number of players drops below five (5), the game will be temporarily suspended. If after a reasonable amount of time, the team cannot field five (5) players, the game shall be abandoned. Total number of players is covered in Section I.A.13.a.

6. The game will have two (2) twenty-five (25) minute playing periods.

7. A goal kick is in active play after it has been kicked and moved. The defending team must be in their own half of the field until the ball is kicked for the goal kick.

8. The offside law applies to the attacking team only in the opponent's side of the field between the goal line and the 14-yard line.

9. A ball set into play as a goal kick or released (throw, punt, or drop kick) by the

goalkeeper within the 14-yard line must touch the ground or another player before it crosses the halfway line. If it does not touch the ground or another player, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the point where the ball crossed the halfway line.

10. IFAB/FIFA Laws of the Game shall apply to direct and indirect free kicks with the following exceptions and additions:

- a. For kick-off, free kicks, and corner kicks, opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball;
- b. If the attacking team commits a foul between the defending team's goal line and the 14-yard line, no attacking players may be between the defending goal line and the 14-yard line on the restart;
- c. When the defending team takes a free kick between their goal line and the 14-yard line, the ball is in play when the ball is kicked and moves. The ball does not need to pass beyond the 14-yard line.
- d. No Penalty kicks will be taken;
- e. All direct and indirect free kicks awarded to the attacking team for fouls or infractions inside the defending team's 14-yard line shall be taken from the defending's team's 14-yard line at the point closest to where the foul or infraction was committed.

11. A player who takes a throw-in or a kick-off improperly will be given a second try.

12. Sanctions for improper substitution:

- a. On the first occasion when a player (or group of players) enters or leaves the field of play without the referee's permission, the referee shall remind the coach that players may not enter or leave the field without permission. The player(s) shall not be shown a yellow card. The coach shall not be given a yellow card.
- b. On subsequent occasions when a player (or group of players) enters or leaves the field of play without the referee's permission, the referee may sanction the coach of that team with a yellow card. The player(s) shall not be shown a yellow card.

13. ECYSA will invite all registered teams to participate in a fee-free Friendship Jamboree held after the conclusion of the regular season. Teams that sign up for the Jamboree and do not appear will be fined.

14. The US Soccer Association has adopted policies to reduce the number of concussions sustained by youth soccer players. ECYSA's implementation of these policies includes treating deliberately heading the ball or attempting to head the ball as dangerous play. When a player deliberately heads the ball, or attempts to head the ball, the referee shall stop play immediately (do not play advantage) and award an indirect free kick to the opposing team, even if the player's action may have denied a goal. The location of the restart shall be according to the Laws of the Game as amended by the G4 section.

E. Exceptions for G6 Games

1. The G6 Grade Group shall play Nine vs. Nine (9 v 9). IFAB/FIFA Laws shall apply with the following exceptions.

2. Field of play

- a. Minimum of 45 x 70 yards and maximum of 55 x 80 yards.
- b. Markings needed:

- (1) Goal lines and Touchlines.
 - (2) Goal area 18 yards on the Goal line. 6 yards onto the playing field.
 - (3) The penalty area is 34 yards on the goal line, extending into the field 14 yards. A Goalkeeper can handle the ball anywhere in this area.
 - (4) Halfway line and Center circle (8-yard radius).
 - (5) Corner Flag and corner quarter circles.
 - (6) Goal sizes 6 feet high and 18 feet wide. Goal sizes 7 feet high and 21 feet wide can also be used.
 - (7) Mid-field flag (optional).
3. The ball size that will be used will be a number 4.
 4. Nine (9) players including the Goalkeeper shall be on the field for each team. A team will play with no less than six (6) players. If at any time the number of players drops below six, the game will be temporarily suspended. If after a reasonable amount of time, the team cannot field six players, the game shall be abandoned. Total number of players is covered in Section I.A.13.a.
 5. Off-sides will be called in the entire attacking half of the field.
 6. A ball released (throw, punt, or drop kick) by the goalkeeper from their penalty area must touch the ground or another player before it reaches the opponent's penalty area. If it does not touch the ground or another player, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the point where the ball crossed the halfway line.
 7. For kickoffs, free kicks and corner kicks, opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.
 8. The penalty spot is 10 yards from goal line, centered between the goal posts. All players other than the kicker and the keeper must be at least 8 yards from the ball, behind the penalty mark, outside the penalty area and arc. The penalty kick will be taken pursuant to the LOTG.
 9. Sanctions for improper substitution:
 - a. On the first occasion when a player (or group of players) enters or leaves the field of play without the referee's permission, the referee shall remind the coach that players may not enter or leave the field without permission. The player(s) shall not be shown a yellow card. The coach shall not be given a yellow card.
 - b. On subsequent occasions when a player (or group of players) enters or leaves the field of play without the referee's permission, the referee may sanction the coach of that team with a yellow card. The player(s) shall not be shown a yellow card.
 10. The US Soccer Association has adopted policies to reduce the number of concussions sustained by youth soccer players. ECYSA's implementation of these policies as dangerous play:
 - a. When a player deliberately heads the ball, or
 - b. Attempts to head the ball,
 The referee shall stop play immediately (do not play advantage) and award an indirect free kick to the opposing team, even if the player's action may have denied a goal. The location of the restart shall be according to the Laws of the Game.

F. Communication Guidelines

1. COACHES:

a. Travel Directors are the primary contact between ECYSA and the coaches. If a coach has a question they should first contact their Travel Director, then, if necessary, the appropriate ECYSA Grade Division Director. The Travel Director will pursue an answer and get back to the coach. In the case of a reschedule request, the coach contacts their Travel Director to make the request.

b. Individual coaches should not contact Board members other than Grade Group Division Directors. Travel Directors are the lines of communication with the league. League officials other than Grade Division Directors will not accept phone calls from coaches.

2. TRAVEL DIRECTORS/LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES:

a. Any questions you have should be directed to the appropriate League officer, i.e. Registrar, Treasurer, Grade Division Director, etc.

b. Questions of rules, policy or general information should be directed to your Regional Vice-President first.

3. ECYSA BOARD MEMBERS /OFFICIALS

a. Travel Directors shall be included in all communications between ECYSA and any member of their organization.

4. Parents, guardians, spectators, and players may not initiate direct communication with any ECYSA Official. Parents, guardians, spectators, and players who want to communicate with ECYSA must do so through their coach and/or their Travel Director using procedures established by ECYSA. ECYSA may assess teams card points for each instance in which a parent, guardian, player, or spectator violates this rule.

II. Discipline

A. Overview

1. ECYSA's President will appoint members to a Standing Committee for Discipline (SCD). The SCD shall be chaired by an ECYSA Vice-President. If an ECYSA Vice-President is not available, the President may appoint another ECYSA Board Member as chairperson. The SCD may include representation from board members of Member Organizations.

2. ECYSA may deny a player, coach, spectator, team or Member Organization the opportunity to participate in games and tournaments sanctioned by ECYSA for violations of the Rules and Procedures.

3. Referees enforce the Laws of the Game and may take disciplinary action in accordance with the Laws of the Game. The Laws of the Game do not provide a remedy for contesting sanctions - yellow cards, red cards, warnings, or dismissals issued by the referee during a match. Receipt of any sanctions may not be protested or appealed.

B. Cards & Card Points

1. When a referee sanctions a player or coach with a yellow card, a red card or a combination of red and yellow cards, the player or coach's team will be assigned card points as

follows:

- a. One yellow card in a game = 1 point
- b. One red card in a game = 2 points
- c. One yellow card and one red card in a game = 3 points
- d. Second yellow card and red card = 2 points

2. A player who is shown a red card may not participate in the remainder of that match. The player must leave the field complex immediately. In the event that a parent or guardian is not available to transport a G8 or younger player from the field complex, the player may remain on the bench, wearing a pinnie or cover over their jersey, and be placed under the supervision of a coach who assumes full responsibility for the player's conduct and who will be held accountable for any further misconduct committed by the player. In addition, the player shall be suspended from their next game.

3. A coach who is dismissed by the referee or by a league official may not participate in the remainder of that match. The coach must leave the field complex immediately. In addition, the coach shall be suspended from all ECYSA activities for a minimum of two scheduled weeks of play. This suspension is not appealable. The coach may be subject to additional appealable sanctions upon review by the league. A coach who is ejected from a game shall not return to the field after the game.

4. Once points are assessed to a team, coach, or player, they may not be voided by transferring the player or coach to another team or by dropping the player or coach from the team's roster.

5. Teams that receive excessive card points in a single season will receive the following additional sanctions:

a. For teams with an eight-game regular season schedule the following game points will be deducted from the team's total in their group standing:

Number of Card Points	Game Point Deductions
0-8	0
9-12	1
13-16	2
17-18	3
19 or more	Not Eligible for Playoffs

b. For teams with a six-game regular season schedule the following game points will be deducted from the team's total in their group standing.

Number of Card Points	Game Point Deductions
0-12	0
13-16	2
17-18	3
19 or more	Not Eligible for Playoffs

6. Any player receiving three (3) individual Yellow Cards, in a season, without the issuance of a Red Card will result in a one game suspension served during their team's next game played to completion.

7. After the conclusion of the regular season and prior to the ECYSA Championship Tournament, all card points for a team are voided. Card points for players and coaches carry

over into post-season play.

8. Suspensions can only be served against an actual game played to completion. Postponements, forfeits or reschedules do not count towards suspension(s) served. ECYSA will deem a suspension served if a game is played to completion even if the game is subsequently canceled.

9. Cards and fines for Coaches

Cautions (yellow cards) for coaches will be cumulative during the season. Upon a second yellow card during a season, and for each subsequent yellow card, the coach will be suspended for one subsequent game at a minimum. Suspensions will carry over to the playoffs and/or to the next season.

Organizations will be fined when their coaches receive yellow cards and red cards. No fine for first yellow card. \$100 fine for second yellow card in a season for a coach, \$300 for third yellow card in a season. \$250 fine for a red card to a coach. \$500 fine for a second red card to a coach in a season.

C. Disciplinary Process

1. ECYSA and its designated officials may take disciplinary action against Coaches, Players, Referees, Spectators and Officials of Member Organizations using one or more of the following procedures:

a. After receiving and reviewing a written report documenting an individual's violation of the Laws of the Game, ECYSA Rules & Procedures, or the MYSA Codes of Conduct or Zero Tolerance Policy, the Boys or Girls Commissioner may take the following actions against players, coaches, teams and/or spectators:

- (1) Take no action,
- (2) Issue letters of reprimand,
- (3) Place a player, coach, or spectator on probation,
- (4) Issue a suspension of one or more games,
- (5) Issue card points to players, coaches, or teams (for unacceptable conduct by spectators),
- (6) Recommend a Full Disciplinary Hearing.

b. A person suspended by a Commissioner may request and is entitled to a Full Disciplinary Hearing by written notification to the Commissioner who issued the suspension within 3 days (72 hours) of the date and time of notification. An appeal fee of \$250 must be paid by the organization to which the person or team is registered. Should the sanction be lifted or reduced, one-half of the fee shall be refunded to the organization.

c. A Full Disciplinary Hearing shall be conducted pursuant to the current version of the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association Member Procedures for Disciplinary Actions, Reconsideration, and Appeals, & Grievances, Reconsiderations, and Appeals. The President of ECYSA may call for a Full Disciplinary Hearing based on any information suggesting a violation of the Laws of the Game or of ECYSA Rules and Procedures. ECYSA's SCD will hear all Full Disciplinary Hearings. The Chairperson may not vote except to break ties. The SCD is not bounded by decisions previously made by the Boys or Girls Commissioner and may, at its discretion, uphold, increase, or decrease the severity of sanctions. The SCD may take the following actions against players, coaches, teams and/or spectators:

- (1) Take no action, effectively upholding the Commissioner's ruling,
- (2) Nullify or reduce the sanctions/decisions of the Commissioner,
- (3) Issue letters of reprimand,

- (4) Place a player, coach or spectator on probation,
- (5) Suspend players, coaches, or spectators for one or more games,
- (6) Issue card points to players, coaches, or teams (for unacceptable conduct by spectators),
- (7) Recommend to the full ECYSA board suspension of teams or organizations for one or more games, or for one or more seasons.

d. The decision of the Full Disciplinary Hearing shall be the final decision of the League.

e. ECYSA shall notify any coach, player, or spectator of disciplinary action taken against them in writing by email or regular mail. This notification shall include the date and time by which an appeal must be submitted. ECYSA shall also provide the same information to their Member Organization's Travel Director.

f. A person, team, or member organization may appeal decisions of the League in accordance with Mass Youth Soccer rules and procedures.

2. Reports of physical assault on a referee will be referred to the Massachusetts State Referee Committee (MSRC). ECYSA may still hold a hearing and administer disciplinary action in advance of or after an MSRC hearing.

D. Ejections

1. Each on field Player Ejection will result in the offending team playing one (per ejection) player short for the remainder of that game. Ejection penalties in the last game of the season carry over to the following season. A second ejection during a season will result in banishment from all league activities for the Playing Season.

2. Failure of a player to leave the field complex after being sent off or of a coach to leave the field complex after being ejected is grounds for the referee to abandon the match. EXCEPTION: In the event that a parent or guardian is not available to transport a G8 or younger player from the field complex, the player may remain on the bench, wearing a pinnie or cover over their jersey, and be placed under the supervision of a coach who assumes full responsibility for the player's conduct and who will be held accountable for any further misconduct committed by the player.

3. If a team member leaves the bench to participate in a disturbance on the field and thereby is ejected by the referee, that team member shall automatically be suspended for the duration of the season and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

4. All assaults on the Referee will result in a minimum of one calendar year suspension (one year from date of action). All Referee Assaults will be referred to the State Associations (Mass Youth Soccer and MSRC).

5. If all coaches are ejected from the same team and no affiliated coach (with card) is available to take over, the game shall be considered a forfeit loss. If all coaches are ejected from both teams and a situation exists where no affiliated coach is available, both teams are awarded a forfeit loss.

6. Any Player, Spectator or Coach who has been suspended by ECYSA or Mass Youth Soccer for three or more consecutive games must reapply to the ECYSA Board of Directors for reinstatement.

E. Conditions of Forfeiture

1. Violation of the MYSA Codes of Conduct or Zero Tolerance Policy
2. Violation of Section I.C. Operating Rules for Towns, Player Eligibility
3. Violation of Section I.D Operating Rules for Towns, Coaches Eligibility
4. Violation of Section I.B.2 Reschedule deadlines
5. Violation of Section I.B.3 Agreement
6. Violation of Section I.C.2 Match Requirements
7. Violation of Section I.C.3. Color conflict
8. Violation of Section I.C.4.a and b Fields
9. Violation of Section I.C.6.d Appear at field
10. Violation of Section I.C.7.a and b Minimum number of players; Rosters
11. Violation of Section I.C.8.c. ID Cards and Rosters
12. Violation of Section II.D.5. No available coach
13. For non-results oriented Divisions (e.g. G4 boys and girls) and seasons for which there is no post season play, ECYSA may sanction a team with an administrative forfeit. An administrative forfeit allows the result of a game to stand and preserves ECYSA's authority to issue fines.

F. Unbecoming Conduct

1. Any player, spectator, official, or coach who engages in unbecoming conduct may be subject to disciplinary action by the appropriate Boys or Girls Commissioner. Examples of unbecoming conduct include but not limited to, violations of the Codes of Conduct, providing technical instruction from the spectator side of the field, fighting, foul language, taunting, running up an excessive score or use of noise makers such as cow bells, vuvuzelas and whistles.

Sanctions may include:

- a. No further action
- b. Written Warning
- c. Probation not to exceed more than a calendar year
- d. Suspension up to three (3) games, including the original penalty
- e. Referral to the Discipline Committee for further review and action

2. The Discipline Committee has the right to impose further penalties for multiple violations by Team or Team Members.

3. The appeals process for any decision rendered by an ECYSA Commissioner shall be to the following:

- a. ECYSA Discipline Committee
- b. Mass Youth Soccer, where applicable
- c. United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), where applicable

G. Referee Support and Control of Spectators

1. Refer to Mass. Youth Soccer Codes of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy as currently in effect.

2. All players and coaches must stay within the technical area except for players on the field and those waiting at the mid-line ready to substitute. Spectators are expected to stay 3 feet from the touchline on the side of the field opposite the teams. No spectators will be allowed behind the goals or end lines.

Exceptions: 1) A field with stands/bleachers behind the team bench or goal/end line. 2) A field that does not have room for a spectator sideline. In this case, a town should establish a technical area per LOTG - Law 1 and set a 6 foot outer boundary for spectator viewing area. At all times, the referee has the authority to move spectators and establish a boundary for spectators per LOTG - Law 5.

3. Penalties for unruly spectators may be recommended by the Discipline Committee to the ECYSA Board of Directors and could include having a team play all away games, suspension of a team from the league, and/or requiring a team to play without any spectator support.

H. Protests

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

a. A team knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player within ECYSA, or

b. There has been a clear misapplication of the laws of the game that directly affects the outcome of the match, and the referee acknowledges it. The referee assignor must obtain a written admission of the error from the referee(s) within 48 hours of the protest being filed for this to be heard by the protest committee.

2. No protests will be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the referee during play. The Laws of the Game clearly state in Law V (Referees) that... "Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final." A game cannot be protested because one coach, or both for that matter, thinks the referee was unskilled. This matter can be handled by following Communications Guidelines, Section I.F.

I. Protest Guidelines

1. All protests must be type written and will not be accepted otherwise.

2. The Member Organization's Travel Director, or their authorized representative approved by ECYSA, may submit a protest, together with the protest fee, to the Vice-President in whose area the game was played. If the game was played in the Northeast the protest will be sent to the Northeast VP; if played in the North Shore, the North Shore VP. See the Travel Director listing on the ECYSA web page for the list of Member Organizations and regions.

3. All protests and fees must be received by ECYSA within forty-eight (48) hours of the protested game's completion.

4. All protest decisions will be reported in writing, within two (2) weeks of the receipt of the protest, to any coaches involved, the appropriate Travel Directors, Referee Assignor and the appropriate Division Director. If the protest carried, only the appeal fee shall be refunded. One copy will be kept on file with all relevant documents.

5. Any appeal of the Protest Committee's decision shall be directed to ECYSA Appeals Committee with the additional specified fee. If the appeal is carried, only the appeal fee paid to ECYSA will be refunded in full. Any appeal of the ECYSA Appeals Committee's decision shall be directed to Mass Youth Soccer. Appeal beyond Mass Youth Soccer will be directed to USYSF.

6. The Protest Committee shall not exceed five (5) members. The President with approval of the Board of Directors will appoint up to four (4) members, the fifth member being one of the sitting Vice-Presidents. No person can sit on any Protest Committee if that person is involved with any of the teams, players, or Grade Group involved with the protest.

J. Summary of Fees and Fines

1. Fees

a. All fees must be submitted at the time of registration on the current ECYSA Team Fee Submission Form.

b. The amount of the fees will be determined seasonally by the Board of Directors.

c. Appearance Bond: deleted July 18, 2022.

2. Fees and Fines Structure will be reviewed seasonally by the ECYSA Board of Directors and published on the ECYSA website.

K. ECYSA Lopsided Score Policy

While most of the approximately 2,000 ECYSA games played each season are fairly well balanced, there are invariably situations where one team is clearly superior, and the game's score becomes lopsided.

ECYSA has a policy to address these issues. It may seem excessive, but we try and make the soccer experience a good one for all involved and lopsided scores are not fun for anyone.

What defines a lopsided game?

Any Grade 4 through Grade PG12 match with a winning margin of 7 or more goals will be deemed a “lopsided score” and the Travel Director will be contacted to review circumstances with the coaches involved. In all age groups, ECYSA may request coach and referee reports to determine if the coach or coaches of the winning team are subject to individual sanction under Sportsmanship and Coach Code of Conduct Policies.

Disciplinary Sanctions for Grade 6 and above:

Weekly scores will be reviewed by the ECYSA Board of Directors. The winning team in a match involving a lopsided score will receive reduced standing points for the match according to the schedule below.

1st Offense - Team is credited with 2 standings points instead of 3 for win

2nd Offense – Team is credited with 1 standings point instead of 3 for win

3rd and all further Offenses – Team is credited with 0 standings points for win

Points deductions will be automatic. A Travel Director may request a review of the deduction if there is evidence of extenuating circumstances provided. Please note that lopsided score occurrences will be given significant weight in future team placements for individual teams as well as programs. Travel Directors are reminded that detailed and accurate strength chart submissions are a key to proper placement and minimizing competitive imbalances.

L. Penalties for Spectator Behavior

The League will implement fines and suspensions for improper spectator behavior. The first game with improper spectator behavior will result in a warning to the team. The second game with improper spectator behavior will result in a \$250 fine to the organization, and a one game suspension of spectators at the game of that team. The third game with improper spectator behavior will result in a \$500 fine to the organization, and the suspension of spectators being able to be present at the games of that team for the remainder of the season.

III. Referees

A. Expectations for Referees

1. Referees shall enforce the Laws of the Game and the Rules of ECYSA to the best of their ability and in an unbiased manner.

2. Referees shall wear an approved uniform consisting of a USSF yellow, blue, red, green, pink or black jersey, black shorts, and black socks with three white stripes or approved logo. The referee shall wear a current year USSF patch. During inclement weather, referees may wear black warm up pants over their shorts and a black hat on their heads.

3. Referees shall conduct themselves in a professional manner.

4. Each game will have only one center referee. When a three-referee system is in use, and only two referees are present, one of those referees shall be the center and one shall be an assistant. The center referee may, at their discretion, use a club linesman in lieu of a second assistant referee.

5. Club linesmen should receive instruction from the center referee before the start of the game. The center referee should make it clear that their decisions are final and must not be questioned. The relationship of club linesmen to the center referee must be one of assistance, without undue interference or any opposition. Club linesmen are to signal only when the ball is entirely over the goal line or touch line.

6. Referees do not issue forfeits. Only ECYSA may issue forfeits.

7. Where the validity of any player's documentation (picture and/or name on the roster) or right to participate in the match is or becomes a matter of dispute between the two teams, with no resolution prior to the match, the referee must allow the player to participate and then must include all details in the match report. (An example would be the case where one team says that an opposing player has been suspended and is not eligible to play in this game, but the player's team disputes this.)

B. Referee Assignor

1. The Referee Assignor will provide referees and is responsible to assign all regular season games and the ECYSA Championship Tournament. Referees assigned by the Referee Assignor will have current USSF certification and wear a current year badge.

2. If the Referee Assignor does not have sufficient coverage for all games, the Assignor will return uncovered game(s) to the home team's Travel Director for assignment of an acting referee.

3. Even if a prospective acting referee meets the qualification requirements, the visiting team has the right to accept or reject the use of an acting referee prior to scheduled game time. Once the game begins, it is considered an official match. If the game is not played due to disagreement over an acting referee, then the game must be rescheduled using the Game Change form by following the guidelines set forth elsewhere in these Rules. Note also that the home team coach must report the game as not played in the scoring section of the ECYSA website. The ECYSA Board of Directors encourages coaches to accept acting referees unless there is a compelling reason to do otherwise.

C. Reporting Time

1. Referees must be at the field fifteen minutes prior to the starting time.

D. Pre-Game Activities

1. Prior to all games in all divisions, referees MUST verify player, coach, and team credentials by checking the following:

- a. The photographs on each roster look like the players on the roster.
- b. For the use of player pass, that the date on the roster matches the date of the game.
- e. Each coach's Mass Youth Soccer Identification Card and coach ID card, and that the photograph of the coach looks like the coach presenting the ID card.

2. Referees shall retain all rosters for the duration of the match to utilize as needed for their game score card and game reports.

3. Referees will check the safety of the player's footwear, shin guards with socks covering them entirely (mandatory), and will not allow a player to play with any jewelry or dangerous items. Referees may allow players to play with hair adornments if they are secured. The referee shall deem that the hair adornments are not a safety issue.

4. Players with casts or splints will not be allowed to play in any ECYSA games.

E. Team Roster and Game Summary Card

1. All team rosters used at games will be approved by ECYSA.

2. The team roster will be presented to the referee for team check-in, retained by the referee until the conclusion of the game, and returned to the respective coaches.

F. Post-Game Activities

1. Referees will fill in the score, names of ejected and cautioned players/coaches and field conditions on the game score card provided by the home coach.

2. The game score card must be completed at the field and the respective coaches must be given an opportunity to take a picture of the game score card after the game has been completed.

3. The final score must be entered using ECYSA's online score reporting system.

G. Unplayable Fields

1. The referee will make the final decision on whether or not a field is playable.

H. Abandoned Games

1. If the Referee abandons a game for any reason, they should not accept an offer to continue officiating the match as a "friendly" game because the game is no longer considered sanctioned by ECYSA.

I. Referee Fees & Fee Forfeiture

1. Referee fees will be established prior to the start of the season.

2. After a game is completed, the referee will fill out the game card including the score and any sanctions.

3. Within 48 hours of a game's completion, the referee will enter all information on the game card into the online reporting system.

4. Failure of the referee to enter game information into the online system in a timely manner may result in loss of payment for that game.

5. Failure of the referee to submit a Match Report may result in loss of payment for that

game.

6. A referee will forfeit fees when he/she fails to abide by the Rules and Regulations established by ECYSA. This includes but is not limited to the wearing of the proper uniform and current USSF patch.

J. Referee Match Reports

1. All Referee Match Reports shall be submitted using the ECYSA online Match Report form within 24 hours.

2. The referee shall submit a Match Report whenever one or more players is/are injured or to report unusual incidents including but not limited to an abandoned game, disputed player eligibility, and dismissal of a coach or spectator.

3. The referee shall submit a Match Report when so directed by the Referee Assignor.

IV. ECYSA Championship Tournament & Post Season Play

A. ECYSA Championship Tournament Director

1. The ECYSA Tournament shall be conducted under the auspices of the ECYSA appointed Tournament Director, who shall 1) oversee all facets of the Tournament, 2) develop procedures to govern Tournament play and enforce the Tournament Rules, and 3) appoint Site Directors when games are played at multiple field complexes.

2. Any rules outlined in the Tournament section of the ECYSA operating rules are for informational purposes only. The ECYSA Board of Directors will establish effective tournament rules and the Tournament Director will present them to the playoff coaches.

3. Unless otherwise specified in the Tournament Rules or in this section, all regular season rules apply to The Tournament.

B. Tournament Schedule

1. The ECYSA Championship Tournament schedule is final when posted on the ECYSA website. ECYSA Division Directors must inform Coaches of their team's eligibility as soon as possible after the season ends. The Division Directors must also notify the Tournament Director as to the teams competing in the playoffs. All teams that make the ECYSA playoffs and know they cannot complete the entire playoffs must notify the appropriate Grade Group director as soon as possible.

2. If any team has potential conflicts (religious and school events only) with the dates (set in the beginning of each spring season) of the ECYSA Championships tournament, they must contact their Grade Group Director on or before, the Thursday before Memorial Day. ECYSA will try to accommodate requests made on or before

this date. Not all requests will be able to be honored.

C. Qualification & Seeding

1. For G6 and older, tournament matches will be scheduled to determine ECYSA's MTOC 1&2 and County 1, 2 and 3 Grade Group champions.
2. First and second place teams in each group of regular season play in MTOC 1&2 and County 1, 2 and 3 will participate in the ECYSA Tournament.

Exception: The MTOC-1 Group 1 shall have the top three finishing teams qualify to participate in the ECYSA Tournament, providing that the group consists of a total of 8 or more teams.

As and if necessary, initial round byes will be awarded to the top-most of the total qualifying teams in each division to reduce the number of initial advancing teams to either a total of 8, 4, or 2 teams for the next subsequent playoff round.

3. If two teams are tied on points for all games played during the regular season, the tournament qualifier will be selected using the tie-breaker process outlined below. If three or more teams are tied for two playoff berths, the same process will be applied in two rounds. Once the first qualifier is identified, the process will start over again from the beginning with all originally involved teams minus the first qualifier:
 - (1) Head-to-head competition. (Points, in games played against each other. NOTE: Head to Head Competition can ONLY be used if ALL teams currently involved have played the same number of games against each other.)
 - (2) Least over all losses.
 - (3) Total allowed goal differential points. (+3 goal differential maximum allowed per game)
 - (4) Lowest overall goals against, maximum of three against per match.
 - (5) A playoff game between those teams. Teams must be prepared to play a Sunday or a weekday game. Playoff games are typically scheduled for Monday.
4. Qualification and Seeding of G10 and PG Teams into the ECYSA Championship Tournament.
The qualification and seeding of G10 and PG teams into the ECYSA Championship Tournament will follow the same procedures used for all other ECYSA Grade Groups, with the exception that the number of teams qualifying from each group and the total number of qualifying teams shall be determined prior to the season start when the teams are placed into divisions and groups for competition. The G10 and PG Boys and Girls Divisions may use different playoff formats.

D. Rosters

1. All players properly rostered for the regular season are eligible to play in the ECYSA playoffs. This includes all players on teams with expanded rosters.
2. For teams that represent ECYSA at the Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC), the maximum number of registered players per team shall be determined in accordance with MTOC rules. (See ECYSA Fact Sheet.)

3. Mass Youth Soccer sets a date for MTOC rosters to be frozen. On or by this date, Member Organizations who have elected to use expanded rosters must provide the ECYSA Registrar an MTOC roster listing at most the maximum required per grade in accordance with MTOC rules. (See ECYSA Fact Sheet).
4. Regular season roster minimums apply to all tournament games.
- E. Competition
 1. Length of matches
 - a. Same as regular season play except that overtime will be used.
 - b. Overtime will be played according to MTOC rules.
 2. All team coaches will check in at the Registration Tent at least 1/2 hour before the scheduled start of the game. Any player not properly registered will not be allowed to play. Teams will report to their appropriate field, 10 minutes before the scheduled kick-off. The referee and assistant referees will check player equipment, ID cards and rosters on the field.
 3. Only team uniforms will be allowed on the field. No sweats, except on Goalies, no headgear, such as headbands or kerchiefs. No other items of clothing will be allowed unless consistent with the team uniform. No casts or splints are allowed. Referees may allow players to play with hair adornments if they are secured. The referee must deem that they are not a safety issue. See Rule I.C.3 Team Uniforms above.
 4. The Tournament Site Director will resolve uniform color conflicts. Home team (highest group) should have pinnies available in case of color conflicts.
 5. Notification of any protest concerning ECYSA Playoffs must be made within fifteen (15) minutes after completion of the game at the appropriate registration site, followed by a written protest and specified fee within 30 minutes of notification. Protests must be made to the ECYSA President or Tournament Site Director.
 6. Coaches will be responsible for the actions of their spectators. All spectators will stay behind the spectator line along the side of the field and may be asked to leave the facility for violation of this rule.
 7. During the tournament, if a winning team cannot participate in their next scheduled game, the losing opponent will advance to the next scheduled game.
 8. Coaches Conduct: The ECYSA Playoffs are a showcase for the organization. As such, coaches are expected to set an example and conduct themselves in the highest manner of sportsmanship towards players, referees and tournament officials. Any coach ejected from an ECYSA tournament game will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, suspension from involvement in any further league activities as determined by the ECYSA tournament committee. Suspended coaches must submit a written request for reinstatement to ECYSA before participating in future league activities.
 9. NO PETS are allowed on tournament fields or at tournament complexes.

F. Player Injuries and First Aid during ECYSA Playoffs

1. Certified Athletic Trainer (C.A.T., hereinafter “Athletic Trainer”) will be provided by ECYSA for the duration of the playoffs.
2. If the referee stops play due to an injury to a player, the Athletic Trainer will attend to that player. Coaches will not remove any injured player from the field.
3. The Athletic Trainer will make the final determination as to any injured player’s involvement in the remainder of the game and any succeeding games in the playoffs.
4. If play of the game was stopped due to injury, the Athletic Trainer will attend to the injured player(s) and that or those player(s) must leave the field until the Athletic Trainer approves the player’s return. The only substitution allowed will be for the injured player.
5. If play was stopped during normal play and the injury dealt with afterwards, the Athletic Trainer will determine if the player or players must leave the field or continue to play.
6. Substitutions will occur in accordance with the rules of the stoppage and/or if the injured player or players are required to leave the field.

G. Massachusetts Tournament of Champions

1. ECYSA’s MTOC 1 and 2 champions of respective Grade Groups will represent ECYSA at MTOC.
2. If a team is unable to participate at MTOC, they must notify the ECYSA President or Tournament Director prior to the Championship Game. If the Division Champion is unable to participate at MTOC, the Division Finalist will be the first team invited to replace the champion and represent ECYSA at MTOC. If the division finalist is unable to participate at MTOC, ECYSA’s representative will be chosen using a procedure established by the Tournament Director.
3. If there are wildcards spots at MTOC – the next best team at the ECYSA Championships will have the spot. Possibility of an additional game does exist. Teams must be able to play at any time through the conclusion of ECYSA tournament weekend or forfeit their spot at MTOC.
 - a. Additional games may be held at the discretion of ECYSA to resolve the team or teams that will represent ECYSA at MTOC.
4. Any fines, including but not limited to no-show fines, assessed to a team representing ECYSA at MTOC shall be the responsibility of that team’s Organization.
5. Disciplinary actions — including red cards and expulsions — issued to players and coaches at the ECYSA Tournament or at MTOC will be reviewed by the ECYSA Board of Directors for potential carry over into the next ECYSA season in which the player, coach, or spectator is eligible to participate.
6. Players participating in ECYSA under the auspices of an ADA waiver are not automatically qualified to participate at MTOC. The player’s Home Organization and parent/guardian must comply with current MTOC rules and procedures in order for the player to

participate at MTOC.

H. ECYSA Tournament Brackets

1. The Tournament Director will post the brackets online @ www.ECYSA.org prior to the Tournament.

I. Tournament Weather Rules

1. Weather: In the event of weather related issues (Thunder & Lightning) air-horns will sound, and all persons will calmly exit the playing surfaces to your vehicles and await further instructions from tournament officials.
2. The tournament staff will attempt to restart games when the storm clears. In a case where weather postpones a game, tournament officials will communicate a new schedule ASAP. Although the goal is to play all games to completion, tournament officials reserve the right to adjust the length of games or make other changes in order to complete the tournament.

V. Coach's Eligibility

1. Every Coach and Assistant coach must be properly registered and affiliated with the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association. Each Coach and Assistant coach (18 and over) must display a valid Mass Youth photo I.D credential with them at each game/practice. Each Member Organization certifies that all coaches they register with ECYSA are fully compliant with Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) requirements and have completed a Concussion Awareness Training course specified by Mass Youth Soccer.
2. Each Coach and Assistant coach must have a valid ECYSA photo I.D. card.
3. Any coach without a valid MYSA credential and a valid ECYSA coach card at any ECYSA sanctioned or recognized events (games, tournaments, exhibitions, etc.) will not be allowed to coach, will be treated as a spectator, and any invalid card presented will be retained by the referee or any other ECYSA official for submission to ECYSA.
4. Coaches and Assistant Coaches may be transferred, dropped and added to any team without limitation or deadline.
5. The coach's name does not have to be listed on the printed roster.
6. Properly registered coaches with a valid ECYSA ID card are eligible to coach any ECYSA team.
7. Either the head coach or one of the assistant coaches listed on the registration roster must attend the Spring Coaches Meeting. If one of the coaches does not attend one of the scheduled meetings, then the coaches will not be eligible to coach the first game of the season. The team can play the first game with a registered substitute coach. Games affected by this situation cannot be rescheduled for any reason. Coaches not attending a scheduled meeting will

be required to attend a special make-up meeting on/or before the first day of the season. If the coach does not attend the special meeting, he/she will not be allowed to coach during the entire season.

8. A coach who is serving a suspension issued by Mass Youth Soccer or ECYSA of three or more consecutive games is not eligible to participate in any ECYSA Sanctioned event or be issued an ECYSA coach card. A suspended coach must apply to and be reinstated by the ECYSA Board of Directors prior to being placed on a roster or participating with any Member Organization.

9. The head coach and the assistant coaches of each team are considered registered if they are properly registered and affiliated with MYSA and ECYSA and have a current identification card.

VI. ECYSA Player Pass Instructions

The current Guest Player Pass Instructions are posted on the ECYSA website.

VII. Language Incidents or Discriminatory Acts Response Guidelines

ECYSA adopts the Language Incidents or Discriminatory Acts Response Guidelines, as promulgated by Mass Youth Soccer.

If a player or coach reports being subject to derogatory language or discriminatory actions, which is heard or seen by the referee crew, the incident will be addressed according to the IFAB Laws of the game.

If a member of the referee team did not hear or witness directly, the Center Referee will implement the following steps:

- Stop the game, if necessary.
- Send both teams to their respective technical areas.
- Gather the referee team.
- Bring both coaches together.
- Explain the situation to the best of your ability and understanding.
- Direct the coaches to resolve the issue immediately. If the coaches are uncooperative, or a resolution cannot be initiated or reached in a reasonable amount of time (resolution not to exceed 5 minutes), the referee will abandon the game immediately.

ECYSA has zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind.

All incidents of discriminatory language and/or actions must be reported to Mass Youth Soccer pursuant to its rules and procedures.

VIII. Pregame Sportsmanship Announcement

Procedure

After all pre-game activities are complete, both teams and the referee crew will line up at the Half Way Line of the Coaches Sideline.

Led by officials, all players and coaches will walk across the field and line up facing spectators, 5 yards from the sideline.

The Sportsmanship Statement will be read by a representative of the Home team to all coaches, players and spectators.

Following the reading of the script, players will perform a pre-game handshake. (Home team to walk down the line of Away Team). After the pre-game handshake, all players and coaches will return to benches and starting players will assume positions on the field of play.

Sportsmanship Statement

Mass Youth Soccer and ECYSA and **Home Organization Name** share a mission to provide a safe, fun and inclusive soccer experience for all participants

All participants deserve the right to play in an environment free from hostile and distracting behavior. Please do your part to create a positive soccer experience for all.

Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated, and sanctions may be applied for violations of policy or codes of conduct.

It is the referee's discretion to terminate the game if any threatening or discriminatory statements are made or for anyone entering the field of play without permission.

IX. Respect the Call Policy (531-9)

ECYSA has adopted and will enforce Policy 531-9, addressing misconduct toward game officials.

See all details at <https://mayouthsoccer.org/referees/respect-the-call/>