



Norton Youth Soccer League, Inc.

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Constitution and By-Laws

Adopted 9 June 2004

Section 1. Name

The Organization shall be called The Norton Youth Soccer League, Inc. The name is commonly abbreviated to Norton Youth Soccer or NYS.

Section 2. Objectives and Philosophy

2.1 The objective of NYS is to provide the opportunity and training for girls and boys to learn the game of soccer through the development of individual fitness, skills, teamwork, and fair play; to foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that promotes the physical and mental well-being of players; and to strengthen community ties by fostering development among families committed to the Norton community.

2.2 The primary recreation season of NYS shall be in the Fall. NYS may also sponsor winter and spring seasons and a summer camp as determined by the Board. In the fall and spring, the league may also operate a competitive program.

2.3 The underlying philosophy of NYS is to provide an atmosphere of good sportsmanship within which players and teams can compete, learn, and enjoy the game of soccer. In this spirit, all teams, coaches, managers, players, and spectators shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and shall cooperate fully with the letter and spirit of the Rules of Play and By-Laws.

2.4 In order to maintain the recreational nature of NYS, team standings are generally not kept at all grade levels and the league will not give out awards, such as trophies or medals, to players. The Board, in its discretion, may approve the use of standings and awards for specific grade levels during the Fall season. Teams and players may receive awards from non-league sources when playing in other seasons, such as indoor, spring, or tournaments.

Section 3. Membership

3.1 Membership shall be open to any and all residents of the town of Norton. Non-residents may become members with the approval of the Board of Directors. Members are either players or volunteers.

3.1.1 Players are members who are eligible to participate on the youth teams. They are not eligible to vote.

3.1.2 Volunteers are people who serve in any capacity other than as players. A qualified adult member is defined as any person 18 years of age or older who is registered with NYS. In some cases, a person may be both a player and a volunteer; for voting purposes, eligibility is based on adult volunteer status (18+). All volunteers must complete any required training and background checks prior to service in accordance with Mass Youth Soccer Guidelines.

3.2 Any person accepted for membership in NYS shall agree to abide by these By-Laws, the Rules of Play, and the NYS Code of Conduct. Upon being found in violation of these requirements by the Board, appropriate action may be taken pursuant to Section 10.

3.3 At all General Meetings, each qualified NYS adult member shall be entitled to one (1) vote. Voting may be conducted in person or by secure electronic/virtual means as authorized by the Board. Voting by proxy is prohibited. A majority vote of those in attendance at the meeting will be required for any issues open to the full membership of NYS.

3.4 Qualified adult members are eligible to nominate or to be nominated for positions designated by Norton Youth Soccer. These qualified individuals are also eligible to vote in elections held by Norton Youth Soccer.

3.5 Each Director shall have one (1) vote on matters before the Board. Directors vote on Board matters; general membership votes are governed by Sections 3 and 5.

3.6 The Officers (as listed in Section 4.1) shall constitute the Executive Board for purposes of these By-Laws. The Executive Board shall determine which votes are conducted by anonymous means and which are public.

Section 4. Government

4.1 The governing body of NYS is the Board of Directors ("Board"), consisting of: President; 1st Vice President (Recreation Director); 2nd Vice President (Competitive Director); Secretary; Treasurer; Registrar; and up to twelve (12) Directors.

4.1.1 Officer positions may be shared by more than one individual as co-officers. In such cases, the Board shall designate one individual as the Lead Officer of record for purposes of filings and voting. Both co-officers may attend and participate fully in meetings; however, each Officer position shall carry only one (1) vote, to be cast by the Lead Officer or their designee.

4.2 The President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Registrar shall be elected to two (2) year terms and are eligible for re-election. Nominations will be taken at the

February General Meeting and elections will be held at the Annual General Meeting in March. In order to be elected President, a person must be a current member in some capacity as an Officer or as a Director.

4.3 There are up to twelve (12) Directors in addition to the Officers. Directors shall serve staggered three (3) year terms and are eligible for re-election to terms of one (1) to three (3) years, with an aim to ensure that staggered terms provide continuity. The Board may fill vacancies on an interim basis; interim appointees serve until the next election cycle and thereafter align to the standard staggered terms.

4.3.1 Each Director is entitled to one (1) vote at all Board Meetings. Directors may participate and vote in person or virtually, provided quorum is met. Proxy voting is not permitted.

4.4 The absence of a Director at two (2) consecutive Board Meetings or a total of four (4) absences for the year starting after the AGM shall cause the Board to consider removal of the Director. Attendance by approved virtual means counts as attendance.

4.5 The President, 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and Registrar shall constitute an Emergency Committee to pass on matters demanding immediate attention where it is impractical to call a Board Meeting. Any emergency decision shall be reported to and ratified by the Board at its next meeting.

4.6 The President shall appoint a Referee Representative and such additional Directors as the Board deems necessary. The appointees shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Board. Vacancies in any Board position shall be filled by this same procedure.

4.7 The Officers and Directors shall assume their offices and duties at the adjournment of the meeting at which they were elected or appointed and shall remain in office until the next election or until replaced.

4.8 The duties and responsibilities of the members of the Board shall be as follows:

4.8.1 President — Shall officially preside at all General Meetings and Board Meetings and be one of those authorized to sign checks.

4.8.2 1st Vice President (Recreation Director) — Shall succeed to the office and powers of the President in their absence or for the remainder of their term if the office is vacated for any reason. In the event of such vacancy, the Board shall elect a successor to the post of 1st Vice President. The 1st Vice President shall be responsible for overseeing operation of the recreational side of NYS, including coordination of recreational uniforms. They shall also serve as permanent Chairperson of the Sportsmanship Review Committee.

4.8.3 2nd Vice President (Competitive Director) — Shall be responsible for overseeing operation of the competitive side of NYS, including coordination of competitive uniforms. They shall also serve as Chairperson of the Protest Board and other committees as the Board deems appropriate.

4.8.4 Secretary — Shall be responsible for:

- Attending all NYS meetings and recording, typing, and distributing the minutes of each meeting to Board members within one (1) week of the meeting date
- Filing all reports that may be required

- All correspondence both within and outside NYS
- Issuing public notices of NYS meetings
- Taking attendance at all meetings

4.8.5 Treasurer — Shall be responsible for:

- Having charge of all monies of NYS and being one of those authorized to sign checks
- Collecting all registration fees, sponsorship fees, and any other money due to the league
- Maintaining a detailed set of records of income and expenditure
- Submitting a balanced budget to the Board prior to the start of the Fall Season
- Submitting a brief report at regularly scheduled Board Meetings, an Annual Report of Finances at the Annual General Meeting, and a Financial Statement at all other General Meetings
- Promptly paying all bills that have been properly passed and approved by the President
- Having responsibility for all property owned by NYS
- Ensuring proper filing of any required tax and accounting documents

4.8.6 Registrar — Shall be in charge of the process of registering players and teams for all seasons in which NYS may participate. Such process includes preparation of team rosters and player pass cards as needed. The Registrar shall also be responsible for sending the appropriate documents to MYSA and SCSL for all participating teams, including required insurance documentation.

4.8.7 Directors — Shall have the responsibility and authority for administering NYS affairs in specific areas assigned by the Board. Each Director shall be responsible for attending regularly scheduled Board Meetings and volunteering to serve on any committee as their schedule permits.

4.9 Training & Education/Risk Registrar — May be managed by a Coaching Director (who may be a non-Board vendor/contractor or volunteer) or by an ad hoc committee. This role ensures coaches meet SafeSport, CORI background check, and licensing requirements; organizes coach and player education; and reports to the Board. This role is also responsible for reporting to the state risk manager.

4.10 Referee Assignor — A Referee Assignor(s) shall be appointed by the President as deemed necessary and approved by the Board. The Referee Assignor(s) shall be responsible for assigning referees for NYS games and for SCSL games. Assignors are not required to be members of NYS or the NYS Board.

Section 5. Meetings

5.1 The Board shall meet not less than six (6) times during the year.

5.2 General Meetings shall be scheduled by the Board with consideration for seasonal needs. Notice may be provided electronically (e.g., email, website, league system) at least one (1) week in advance. A quorum for a General Meeting shall consist of 50% of the Directors then serving, and at least one Officer must be present. Meetings may be held in person or virtually; in-person attendance is encouraged when practicable.

5.3 All matters of policy shall be decided by a simple majority of Board members present and voting, provided quorum (50% of Directors, with at least one Officer present) is met. Electronic/virtual votes count equally to in-person votes.

5.4 Appropriations (as specified in Section 8), and other subjects specified in these By-Laws as requiring a two-thirds vote, shall require a two-thirds majority of Board members present and voting.

5.5 There shall be not less than nine (9) General Meetings during the year. The month of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) may be changed by Board resolution.

5.6 Special or emergency meetings shall be called by the President as required or in response to a written request of three (3) Board members. The Secretary shall notify all Board members of any Special meetings at least two (2) weeks in advance. The Secretary shall notify all Board members at least forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled time of an Emergency Meeting.

5.7 The President may extend invitations to non-members to attend Board or Special meetings.

5.8 There shall be mandatory in-person coaches meetings prior to the start of each recreational and competitive season to ensure coaches are familiar with NYS Rules of Play, responsibilities, and procedures. Additional training and updates may be delivered via flexible formats, including online sessions.

5.9 All Committees shall meet as required to fulfill their responsibilities.

Section 6. Creation of Teams

6.1 Fall Recreational Season — Each year the Board shall determine which age groups will play and whether they will be single sex or coed. The Board shall also oversee selection of players for the Fall recreational teams. This is normally done through the use of player ratings and input from Board members and others familiar with each age group.

6.2 Competitive Travel — If competitive travel teams are formed, players will be selected through a process defined by the Board for each age group. This may include open tryouts, invitational tryouts, or any other system acceptable to the Board based on a majority vote. Tryouts will be held no earlier than the first week of the Recreational Season and must be completed by the end of the Recreational Season. At least one Board member not coaching in that age group, who is not a parent/guardian of a player trying out in that age group, or a Board designee, will be required to be present at every tryout to observe and monitor the fairness of the process. The Board will determine, on an annual basis, the appropriate number of players to be placed on each team prior to final player selections being made. The appointed coach for each age group will be responsible for holding tryouts and player selections. The Board reserves the right to intervene in this selection if a dispute or situation arises which requires mediation between parties. Player selection and roster placement applies to both indoor and spring sessions. The process will be defined by the Board each year and communicated to appointed coaches. Minimum roster sizes for grades five and six shall be 14 players; minimum roster sizes for grades seven and eight shall be 17 players. The Board reserves the right to make exceptions related to roster size, provided a request is made prior to tryouts being announced.

6.2.1 Player Age Eligibility — Each player must participate in his or her appropriate age group as defined by the MYSA age chart. No player will be allowed to play up or down in age. If teams are formed for single ages, players must meet the age definition. If teams are formed for double ages, players must fall within one of the age groups. For example, if a team is classified as U12 and there is no U11 team, the U11 players would play on the U12 team.

6.2.1.1 Exceptions to Recommended Age Groups — Exceptions to recommended age groups must meet MYSA standards.

6.2.2 Boy/Girl Eligibility — Per MYSA, players may register with the gender team they identify with, supported by documentation showing the gender is part of their core identity, such as a birth certificate or a medical professional's documentation.

6.3 Coaches — Coaches will be nominated, appointed, and approved by a simple majority vote of the Board prior to the relevant season start, subject to completion of required training, background checks, and any licensing requirements established by the Board or governing bodies.

6.3.1 Removal of Coaches — Coaches serve at the pleasure of the Board and may be removed and/or replaced by a two-thirds vote for any reason, including but not limited to those outlined under Section 10 of these By-Laws. Should the coach subject be a Board member, they will be recused from the vote.

6.3.2 Appeals — Appeals of removal decisions shall be made to the Protest Board per Section 7.4 of these By-Laws.

Section 7. Boards and Committees

7.1 General — There shall be the following standing committees and roles: (a) Finance Committee (FC); (b) Protest Board; (c) Fundraising & Sponsorship Committee (FSC); (d) Equipment Manager (role); (e) Sportsmanship Review Committee (SRC). The Board may establish ad hoc committees and may assign training/education functions to a Coaching Director or ad hoc committee as described in Section 4.9.

7.2 Conflict of Interest — A member of any Board or Committee defined in Section 7 shall be disqualified from deliberating or voting on a particular issue if that member:

- Was involved in the issue
- Is the spouse or relative of an involved person
- Has a child playing on an involved team
- Has a financial or organizational interest that could reasonably impair neutrality

The Board may temporarily replace the member so involved. A replacement shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board.

7.3 Finance Committee

Composition — A Finance Committee shall be established each operating year consisting of the Treasurer as Chairperson, the President as a permanent member, and three (3) members appointed by the President from the Board and approved by the Board.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Recommend registration fees to the Board
- Recommend payment deadlines to the Board
- Guard the financial well-being of Norton Youth Soccer
- Assist the Treasurer in developing a balanced budget
- Oversee operation of the concession stand
- Coordinate all fundraising efforts

7.4 Protest Board

General — The Protest Board shall settle any disputes that arise from violations of the NYS By-Laws and Constitution, and shall serve as the body of appeal for disciplinary decisions made under Sections 6, 10, and elsewhere in these By-Laws where an appeal is specified. During the Fall season, NYS is a recreational league; scores and standings are not kept and games cannot be protested for any reason.

Composition — The Protest Board shall consist of the 2nd Vice President, who shall be the Chairperson, the Referee Representative, and three (3) members of the Board of Directors appointed by the President.

Quorum — A quorum shall consist of the Chairperson plus any two (2) members of the Protest Board.

Appeal Procedure — A formal appeal, in writing, stating all known facts, shall be sent to the 2nd Vice President within seven (7) days after the decision or event. The President may delay the imposition of penalties until the Protest Board has rendered a determination; otherwise penalties remain in effect until the Protest Board hears the appeal. Decisions of the Protest Board are final unless otherwise specified by Board policy or governing body rules.

7.5 Fundraising & Sponsorship Committee (FSC)

Purpose — The FSC shall generate non-registration income via sponsorships, donations, grants, and events.

Composition — The FSC shall be chaired by the Sponsorship/Fundraising Director and shall include the Treasurer (ex officio) and two (2) to four (4) members appointed by the President and approved by the Board.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Create an annual revenue plan and targets
- Coordinate sponsor recognition and uniform/apparel placements with the 1st Vice President (Recreation Director) or 2nd Vice President (Competitive Director) as appropriate
- Ensure restricted funds are tracked and used as designated
- Report progress quarterly to the Board
- Comply with applicable solicitation laws and Section 8 financial controls

7.6 Equipment Manager — The Equipment Manager shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board. The Equipment Manager is responsible for:

- Acquisition, inventory, distribution, maintenance, and reconciliation of equipment and field-related supplies
- Managing vendors consistent with Section 8 financial controls, including RFP requirements
- Monitoring the condition of all playing surfaces used by NYS, including routine field assessments and coordinating with the league's landscaping contractor to ensure fields are properly maintained and safe for play
- Providing preseason and postseason reports to the Board

7.7 Sportsmanship Review Committee (SRC)

7.7.1 General — The Sportsmanship Review Committee (SRC) shall promote good sportsmanship within NYS and review issues of lack of sportsmanship, game misconduct, inappropriate conduct, unbecoming conduct, or violation of the By-Laws or Rules of Play.

7.7.2 Composition — The SRC shall consist of the 1st Vice President as Chairperson and three (3) members of the Board of Directors appointed by the President.

7.7.3 Quorum — A quorum shall consist of the Chairperson and two (2) other members.

7.7.4 Procedures and Authority

- The Chairperson, when notified of a sportsmanship issue and after fact-finding to determine the validity of the issue, shall have the authority to convene a hearing of the SRC. All SRC actions shall be reported in writing to the parties involved and to the Board of Directors. The SRC shall report any activity at the next NYS Board meeting.
- The SRC shall have the authority to suspend a player or adult volunteer or to take any other actions provided for in the By-Laws or Rules of Play.

7.7.5 Game Monitoring — The SRC shall have the authority and responsibility to arrange for selected NYS matches to be monitored.

- The SRC may ask members of neutral teams to attend selected matches for the purpose of monitoring the behavior of both teams and their fans
- A NYS team may request that a particular match be monitored. The request must be made to the Chairperson and must include the reason for the request
- Observers shall submit a report to the SRC detailing their observations and any recommendations

7.7.6 Appeals — Decisions of the SRC may be appealed to the NYS Protest Board per Section 7.4 of these By-Laws.

7.8 Ad Hoc Committees — The Board may establish ad hoc committees for specific purposes and durations. The Board shall specify the purpose, membership, reporting requirements, and dissolution conditions for each such committee.

7.9 Reporting — Standing committees and the Equipment Manager shall provide at least one written annual report and interim reports as requested by the Board.

Section 8. Financial Policy

8.1 General — NYS shall operate with a balanced budget. The Finance Committee shall recommend all policy with regard to finances to the Board of Directors. The Board shall adopt and maintain financial controls including whistleblower protections and procedures consistent with nonprofit best practices.

8.2 Budget — The Treasurer shall prepare an annual balanced budget for Board approval. Registration fees and revenue plans (including sponsorships and fundraising) shall be established to ensure expenses are covered. The Treasurer shall provide quarterly financial reports and an annual financial report; the Board shall obtain an independent financial review or audit as required by policy or law.

8.3 Fees — Each player shall pay an annual registration fee. Fee amounts shall reflect budgeted expenditures and be recommended by the Finance Committee or Treasurer and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) Board vote. All monies shall be promptly deposited in accounts maintained in the name of Norton Youth Soccer League, Inc.

8.4 Expenses and Expenditures

- No compensation shall be paid to Board members for attending meetings
- The Board may appropriate surplus funds by two-thirds (2/3) vote
- Unbudgeted expenditures in excess of \$500 require Finance Committee review and approval
- Purchases above \$1,000 require approval by a two-thirds (2/3) Board vote
- Dual signatures are required for disbursements greater than \$2,500
- A three-year revolving RFP process is required for vendors or recurring expenses exceeding \$3,000 annually, unless waived by a two-thirds (2/3) Board vote for good cause
- Funds shall be spent only in the interest of NYS; restricted and sponsorship funds shall be used as designated and transparently reported

8.5 Reserves — NYS shall aim to allocate a reasonable minimum annual amount to operating reserves designated for longer-term capital needs, with intent to compound annually, subject to Board policy.

8.6 Scholarships — NYS may collect monies for the purpose of distribution to graduating high school seniors as scholarships. Annual disbursement of funds will be managed by the Finance Committee through a documented process.

Section 9. Dissolution

Upon dissolution, remaining assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code to an organization aligned with NYS's mission, and in accordance with IRS regulations and Massachusetts law.

Section 10. Suspension and Expulsion of Members

10.1 Suspension or Expulsion for Reasons Other Than Game Misconduct — Except for reason of game misconduct, which is addressed in Section 10.2, any member of NYS may be suspended or

expelled from membership by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Board voting. The member involved shall be notified of the intended action seven (7) days prior to the vote via certified letter and may make a statement to the Board before the resolution is put to a vote. The Board may temporarily suspend the member involved until the time that the member can make a statement to the Board. This temporary suspension shall require a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Board voting. The decision of the Board shall be binding on the member. The Board need give no reason for the expulsion to anyone other than the member involved and MYSA.

10.1.1 Appeals of decisions under Section 10.1 shall be made to the Protest Board pursuant to Section 7.4, within timelines established by the Board (e.g., seven (7) days to appeal; decision within thirty (30) days). Acknowledgment of receipt of an appeal request shall be made within forty-eight (48) hours.

10.1.2 Suspended or expelled members may apply for re-admission to NYS by means of written request to the Board of Directors. A two-thirds vote of the Board is required for a suspended or expelled member to be reinstated.

10.2 Suspension or Expulsion for Game Misconduct

10.2.1 General — Game misconduct may occur before, during, or after a match at the location of the match. NYS abides by a strict zero tolerance policy for misconduct, including abuse, bullying, or harassment by players, parents, and coaches. Abuse shall be reported within 24 hours, with increased penalties for referee abuse and specific gross misconduct, defined as behavior including insulting, belittling, taunting, or undermining referees. Misconduct toward game officials, coaches, players, or spectators includes in-person and online/digital conduct directly related to league participation. Misconduct may also occur during travel to and from a match and at later times when directly related to the duties of a game official or the playing of a particular game.

10.2.2 Terms and Conditions

"Misconduct" includes, but is not limited to, assault and abuse as described below.

"Game Misconduct" includes, but is not limited to, actions other than those of abuse or assault which violate the basic principles of NYS regarding sportsmanship and fair play.

"Referee" includes the following:

- All currently registered USSF referees, linesmen, 4th officials, or others duly appointed to assist in officiating a match
- Any non-licensed, non-registered person serving in the capacity of a referee
- Any club linesman

"Coach" includes all currently registered team coaches, assistant coaches, managers, or trainers.

"Player" includes all currently registered persons listed on an official roster as a player on a particular team.

"Spectator" includes all parents, relatives, or friends of a particular team member who attended a game or event involving that team.

"Assault" includes, but is not limited to, the following acts: hitting or attempting to hit, kicking or attempting to kick, punching or attempting to punch, choking, spitting at or on, grabbing or bodily running into, throwing an object that could inflict injury, or damaging clothing or personal property.

"Abuse" includes, but is not limited to, the following acts: using foul or abusive language, spewing any beverage upon a person or their personal property, or verbally threatening another person. Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm, such as "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece."

10.3 Jurisdiction

10.3.1 Assault or Abuse of a Referee — When any player, coach, manager, club official, or game official assaults or abuses a referee, the responsibility to adjudicate the matter shall rest with NYS.

10.3.2 Other Assault or Abuse and Game Misconduct — When any player, coach, manager, club official, or spectator assaults or abuses another player, coach, manager, club official, or spectator, or commits an act of game misconduct, the responsibility to adjudicate the matter shall rest with NYS.

10.4 Hearings — Reports of referee assault or abuse shall be made to MYSA. All other reports of assault or abuse shall be made to NYS. The Protest Board shall hear reports of assault, abuse, and game misconduct and make appropriate determinations, subject to reporting and ratification requirements in Section 7.

10.4.1 Assault

- When an allegation of assault is verified by NYS, the person is automatically suspended until the hearing on the assault
- NYS must hold a hearing within thirty (30) days of the assault. If the league does not adjudicate the matter within that time period, jurisdiction shall immediately vest with MYSA
- Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind the automatic suspension

10.4.2 Abuse and/or Game Misconduct — In cases of reported abuse or game misconduct, a hearing is held only when requested by the alleged assailant or otherwise deemed appropriate by NYS.

10.5 Penalties and Suspensions

10.5.1 Assault — The player, coach, manager, or official committing the assault shall be automatically suspended from NYS for a period of at least one (1) year from the time of the assault. If serious injuries were inflicted, the minimum suspension period shall be at least five (5) years. Shorter periods of suspension shall not be provided, but if circumstances warrant, longer suspension periods may be imposed.

10.5.2 Abuse — The minimum suspension period for abuse shall be at least three (3) scheduled matches within NYS. A match shall count toward the suspension period only if it is actually played. A longer suspension may be imposed if circumstances warrant.

10.5.3 Game Misconduct — The minimum suspension for game misconduct shall be at least three (3) scheduled matches within NYS. A match shall count toward the suspension period only if it is actually played. A longer suspension may be imposed if circumstances warrant.

10.6 Appeals — A person sanctioned under this Section may appeal to the Protest Board as specified in Section 7.4. Further appeal procedures, if any, shall be as established by Board policy and governing body rules.

10.7 Reporting Procedure — Referees reporting assault or abuse shall follow applicable USSF/MYSA procedures. All others shall submit a written report within 48 hours to the President or designee. NYS shall report final determinations and suspensions to MYSA as required.

Section 11. Rules of Play

11.1 General — The Board may, from time to time, approve and publish Rules of Play which, providing they do not contravene these By-Laws, shall be binding upon all NYS members and teams. It is desirable that the Rules of Play represent the wishes of the membership. Rules of Play shall generally align with US Youth Soccer, MYSA, and applicable league and town regulations.

11.2 Changes to Rules of Play — Proposals for new or amended Rules of Play may be submitted in writing to the Secretary. The Board may adopt rule changes and distribute them electronically (e.g., email, website). For matters of safety, compliance, or operational necessity, the 1st Vice President (Recreation Director) or 2nd Vice President (Competitive Director) as appropriate may implement immediate changes subject to ratification by the Board at its next meeting.

Section 12. Residency Requirements

12.1 General — The primary intent of NYS is to provide Norton residents with the opportunity to participate in NYS programs. NYS may operate Fall, winter, and spring programs and additional offerings as determined by the Board.

12.2 Residency — All players participating in NYS seasons shall normally reside in the town of Norton. Non-residents may be admitted at the Board's discretion, considering roster balance, minimum team sizes, availability of coaches, and league rules. The Board shall publish the residency policy annually and ensure compliance with MYSA and SCSL requirements.

Section 13. Zero Tolerance

13.1 General — All persons responsible for a team and all spectators shall support the referee. Recognizing that many recreational referees are youth officials, coaches may respectfully engage with referees during games for brief clarifications and to encourage active participation, provided such engagement is constructive, non-argumentative, and does not interfere with play.

13.2 Scope — Zero Tolerance applies to in-person and online/digital conduct directed at referees, officials, coaches, players, or spectators. Sarcasm, harassment, intimidation, and threats are prohibited in any form.

13.3 No one is to address the referee during the game except as allowed below:

13.3.1 Coaches and Managers

During the game, coaches and managers:

- May respond to a referee initiating a communication
- May ask for substitutions
- May point out emergencies or safety issues

At halftime, before the game, or at the end of the game, coaches and managers:

- May ask a referee to explain a rule in a polite and constructive way
- May offer polite and friendly feedback to the referee

Absolutely no sarcasm, harassment, or intimidation is allowed in any conversation with the referee.

Penalties: Penalties will be determined per the MYSA Code of Conduct.

If the referee abandons the game, the referee shall file a report to the league President. The NYS Board will take whatever action is appropriate.

13.3.2 Spectators

During the game, spectators:

- May respond to a referee initiating a communication
- May point out emergencies or safety issues

Penalties:

- 1st Infraction — Referee should stop the game and ask the coach to quiet the offending spectator
- 2nd Infraction — A verbal warning. Referee should stop the game and ask the coach to warn the spectator that the next infraction will result in ejection or the referee will abandon the game
- 3rd Infraction — The referee shall instruct the coach to direct the spectator to leave the field. The referee should abandon the game if the spectator refuses to leave and contact the Referee Assignor or a Board member if the Referee Assignor is not available

If the referee abandons the game, the referee shall file a report to the league President. The NYS Board will take whatever action is appropriate.

Section 14. Amendments to the By-Laws

14.1 Amendments to these By-Laws may be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors.

14.2 Notice — Proposed By-Law amendments shall be distributed electronically to all Directors at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting at which they will be considered. The Board may also publish notice to the membership for transparency. Electronic/virtual voting is permitted.

Version History

- Date Adopted: 9 June 2004 (v. 1.0)
- 10 November 2004 (v. 1.1)
- 14 March 2007 (v. 1.2) — Modified Sections 6.2.1 and 6.3.1
- 12 February 2009 (v. 1.3) — Modified Section 6.2.1
- 11 March 2009 (v. 1.4) — Modified Section 3.4
- 9 March 2010 (v. 1.5) — Modified Sections 4.2 and 5.2
- 12 April 2016 (v. 1.6) — Modified Sections 4.3, 6.2, and 6.2.1.1
- 12 May 2026 (v. 2.0) — Comprehensive revision; see change summary