

# PA WEST SOCCER ASSOCIATION

## Youth Division Rules 2011 – 2012

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## **Article 1 – Introduction**

### **1.1**

Soccer in western Pennsylvania will be known as a sporting activity where courtesy, common sense, and good sportsmanship prevail. The Youth Board of Directors issues these Rules and Regulations to supplement the current FIFA Laws of the Game and US Youth Soccer rules and are to be followed uniformly. The purpose of these Rules and Regulations is to encourage the playing of youth soccer by providing a uniform and organized standard. Sportsmanship and fair play is the standard in all instances whether enumerated in a written rule or not.

Harassment, abuse, or assault of referees is not to be tolerated; the right of each player, coach, team/club official, parent and spectator to attend games is a privilege that can be lost by inappropriate conduct.

### **1.2**

These rules govern all play and are supported by Youth Division Regulations which carry the same obligation of compliance. Clubs have the right to retain house rules for their In- House providing such rules are consistent and in accord with PA West Soccer and US Youth Soccer rules. All Districts and Divisions have the right to augment the Rules with the approval of the PA West Soccer Youth Board. Rule violations are subject to a hearing. "TOPSoccer" players will be granted exceptions to the rules and regulations.

### **1.3**

A claim of ignorance of these rules and regulations shall not be satisfactory grounds for the waiving of such rules and regulations.

### **1.4**

Proposed rule changes are to be submitted by February 1 to the State Office to be forwarded to the Youth Board Chair.

The youth board has the authority and obligation to review, change and adjust the rules each year. In addition, the Youth Board has the authority to change or adjust each and any rule that is in conflict with another rule or any policy handed down from US Youth Soccer national or regional authorities at the January meeting.

### **1.5**

All illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, and weapons are prohibited at all PA West Soccer sanctioned or sponsored activities, where youth are present. Clubs/individuals who do not comply with this rule will be required to appear before the Disciplinary Committee. Those found guilty of violations of this rule will be subject to suspension for up to one playing season (one year). The Divisional/District Director, or Tournament Chair, will immediately suspend those involved until the Disciplinary Committee has met and decided the case.

### **1.6**

Only the Youth Board has the authority to grant exceptions to these rules. All requests for exceptions must be submitted in writing to the Youth Board President or his designee (e.g. the Rules Committee) who will include the request on the agenda for discussion at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. A vote on the request will not be taken until the following regularly scheduled meeting. A ¾ vote of the members present will be required to grant an exception. All exception hearings will be held in executive session. These rules will remain in effect until revised or amended as provided by the PA West Soccer Constitution and By-Laws. These rules supersede all presently effective rules. Each District/Division shall have the right to impose fines upon its member clubs/teams for non-attendance at presidents meetings, or to require clubs/teams to post performance bonds for various age group participation. Such fines must be approved by a majority of club voting members present (as defined by that District/Division) from the specific District or Division imposing the fine; all such levies must be approved prior to the start of any season and confirmed by the Youth Board.

### **1.7**

For all disciplinary matters overnight letter shall be the official means of communication, supplemented but not replaced by phone calls or email.

### **1.8**

PA West Soccer's Youth Division may adjust the 2011-2012 Youth Division Playing Rules as necessitated by amendments to the PA West Soccer Constitution and/or Bylaws.

**Article 2 - Definitions**

**ABANDONED GAME:**  
(See TERMINATED GAME)

**CLASSIC DIVISION:**  
A playing division of the Youth Division offering a Saturday playing league for players U12 through and including U19 as provided for in Classic Division Rules.

**COMPETITIVE DIVISIONS:**  
PA West Soccer will offer the following competitive leagues of play:  
State Leagues Division 1 and 2  
State League Division 3  
State League Division 4

**COMPETITIVE PLAYER:**  
A player registered in two (2) or more programs. For example, Community and ODP or Classic or any other national affiliate.

**DISTRICT:**  
A geographically defined area in which the elected Director organizes travel for Divisions 5 and 6 Travel Teams and coordinates any In-House (Recreational League) program matters.

**DIVISION:**  
Inter-District Competitive Leagues in which the elected Director organizes travel for that specific league/division

**FRIENDLY GAME:**  
These games can be arranged by the coach and does not affect the outcome of any league.

**IMPARTIAL HEARING COMMITTEE:**  
An impartial hearing committee is composed of individuals who are not directly involved in the event that required a hearing.

**IN-HOUSE (Recreational League):**  
A league administered at the local level in which:  
1. The use of tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any like process to roster players selectively to any team on the basis of talent or ability is prohibited;  
2. The league accepts as participants in the league any and all eligible youths (subject to reasonable terms or registration);  
3. A system of rostering players is employed for the purpose of creating a fair or balanced distribution of playing talent among all teams participating; and,  
4. Each player plays at least one-half (1/2) of each game except for reasons of injury, illness or discipline.

**INVOLUNTARY RELEASE:**  
The removal of a player from a team's roster at the request of team authorities. (See National Championship Rule 101 and PA West Soccer State Cup Rules for restrictions and specific conditions for teams entering such competitions.)

**LEAGUE:**  
A structured group of four (4) or more teams joined for the purpose of inter-team play under a common set of administrative and competition rules.

**LEAGUE GAME:**  
A game scheduled by the Playing Division/District/League Director. These are required games.

**MAKE-UP GAME:**

A scheduled league game that is rescheduled because the original game was canceled due to inclement weather, or other emergencies affecting playing conditions through no fault of the participants or spectators.

**PLAYING SEASON:**

September 1 of one calendar year thru August 31 of the following calendar year.

**PLAYING SESSION:**

The period of play for either fall or spring. Starting and ending dates of actual play (fall or spring sessions) are established by the Youth Board.

**PICK-UP GAME:**

Game played where one or more of the following conditions occur:

1. One (1) or more players may not be registered;
2. Officials are not used;
3. Registered adult supervision is lacking. No player, spectator, coach, or Club is covered by PA West Soccer insurance in such games.

**RECRUITING:**

Any effort made directly or indirectly on behalf of a team or club to attract a player to said team or club.

**REGISTRATION:**

The execution of an intent to play the sport of soccer and the paying of fees to become a member of a specific team/club, PA West Soccer, and US Youth Soccer.

**ROSTERING:**

The assignment of a registered player to a team.

**SCRIMMAGE GAME:**

Practice game played between two PA West Soccer registered teams with no referees.

**TEAM CARD ACCUMULATION:**

The number of cards (red and yellow) accumulated by players and coaches on a team as on record at the State Office.

**TEAM INTEGRITY:**

A team shall be considered the same team from season to season (different playing years) if N (half) rounded down plus one (1) of the previous year's officially rostered players are rostered on the new year's official roster.

**TERMINATED GAME:**

A game ended by the referee. The status of the game shall be determined by the proper Authority in charge of that game.

**TRANSFER:**

The removal of a player from a team's roster on the request of the player, and the contemporaneous addition of the player to the roster of another team.

**TRAVEL LEAGUE:**

Any non-Classic Division or non-Recreation League play.

**TRAVEL DIVISIONS:**

A travel league administered by the District for Travel League play in which:

1. Each club determines the process to roster players
2. The league does not otherwise meet the definition of a Recreational League or Classic;

**VIOLENT CONDUCT:**

The commission of a violent act against an opponent, official, spectator, or teammate at a match or on the way to or from. This also includes, but is not limited to, the definition under FIFA Law 5

**VOLUNTARY RELEASE:**

The removal of a player from a team's roster at the request of the player.

**PLAYING RULES**

**Article 3 - Game Specifications**

**3.1**

All regularly scheduled games are to be played. Teams in all Districts/Divisions will be provided with a minimum six (6) game schedule two (2) weeks prior to start of playing session. Teams failing to complete their full schedule will be subject to review by the District Director and required to justify their failure to complete their schedule. The coach/team can be subject to suspension for one (1) year and the club can be subject to a fine. This team may also be prevented from participation in the PA West Soccer State Cup or PA West Soccer Open tournaments.

**3.2**

The following specifications are applicable to in-house and travel competition administered by the PA West Soccer Association.

**1. Game duration and ball sizes:**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Ball Size</i>	<i>Circumference</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Goal Size</i>
Under 19	Two 45 min halves	# 5	27" - 28"	14 - 16 Oz	8 x 24
Under 18	Two 45 min halves	# 5	27" - 28"	14 - 16 Oz	8 x 24
Under 17	Two 45 min halves	# 5	27" - 28"	14 - 16 Oz	8 x 24
Under 16	Two 40 min halves	# 5	27" - 28"	14 - 16 Oz	8 x 24
Under 15	Two 40 min halves	# 5	27" - 28"	14 - 16 Oz	8 x 24
Under 14	Two 35 min halves	# 5	27" - 28"	14 - 16 Oz	8 x 24
Under 13	Two 35 min halves	# 5	27" - 28"	14 - 16 Oz	8 x 24
Under 12	Two 30 min halves	# 4	25" - 26"	11 - 13 Oz	7 x 21
Under 11	Two 30 min halves	# 4	25" - 26"	11 - 13 Oz	7 x 21
Under 10	Two 25 min halves	# 4	25" - 26"	11 - 13 Oz	6 x 18

**2. Game Dimensions**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Format</i>	<i>Roster Size</i>	<i>Field Size (max/min)</i>
U12-U19*	11 v 11	18**	90 x 120/50 x 100
U11-U12*	9 v 9	16	50 x 80/50 x 70
U11-U12*	8 v 8***	14	50 x 80/50 x 70
U10	6v6/7v7	14	45 x 60/40 x 55
U8	4 v 4/5 v 5 (no keepers)	8	20 x 25/30 x 35
U6	3 v 3/4 v 4 (no keepers)	6	15 x 20/25 x 30

\* League games require a minimum of 7 players

\*\*May roster 22, but may only dress 18 for a match (excludes U12 to U14 teams intending to compete in the National Championship Series/PA West Soccer State Cup)

\*\*\* Classic only

**3.3 Player Equipment**

1. All players on the field must be attired in matching color uniforms consisting of shorts, jersey (with non conflicting number), socks, shin guards, and legal soccer shoes. The uniform must consist of the club's official color and name. In case of a color clash, the home team will change.

2. All or any member (s) of any team are permitted to wear extra protective clothing including gloves or garment protruding beyond the uniform without dangerous, protruding or hard objects, provided that:

2.1 The proper team uniform is worn outermost;

2.2 Referee discretion may be used to determine if any item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing protection.

**3.4 Scheduling of Games**

Each District/Division (other than for in-house recreational league play) shall arrange to schedule games.

## **Article 4 - The Game**

### **4.1 Prior to the Start of the Game**

Coaches/Managers will provide the following items to the referee:

1. Original validated roster.
2. Player passes for all players who are present and for up to three (3) coaches/managers. Players/coaches arriving late must give their passes to the referee/assistant referee before they can enter the game/technical area.
3. Two (2) properly completed (by the Coach/Manager) lineup cards.
4. No official league game shall be played without presentation of the above item.

### **4.2 Officiating**

1. A currently certified referee shall be appointed to officiate each game with the authority assigned to him as specified in the "Laws of the Game" (FIFA). Officiating of all games will be governed by the Laws of the Game and the Rules of Competition subject to any modifications in these playing rules. Assistant Referee: Should also be certified, but if a certified assistant referee is not available, club linesmen may be used. It is required that PA West Soccer USSF referees use a DSC system (diagonal system of control - three man system).
2. The center referee must be two (2) years older than the age group he/she is refereeing up to the age of 17.
3. The referee will keep the player passes, and one set of lineup cards. He will give each team the lineup card for its opponent. The referee shall not allow any player or coach/manager to participate in the game who does not have a valid player pass or coach's pass.
4. The decision of the Referee on points of fact connected with play shall be final, and the results of the game cannot be appealed.
5. No one may enter or exit the field without the permission of the referee.

### **4.3 Coaching**

1. Coaches 18 and younger must be at least two years older than the age group they are coaching.
2. Coaches under the age of 18 must be in the company of at least one coach of legal age at all times
3. Coaching from the technical area, i.e. giving directions to one's own team on points of strategy and position, is permitted without-mechanical or electronic devices
4. Each coach or substitute player is to remain within technical area. The technical area shall be defined as 10 yards each side of the half line. Spectators shall view the game from the opposite side of the field from the technical area.
5. No coach, player or spectator is to use profanity.
6. No coach, player or spectator is to incite, in any manner, disruptive behavior of any kind.
7. It shall be the responsibility of each coach and/or manager to maintain proper spectator conduct. They shall be held primarily accountable for the conduct of the spectators for or from their respective teams.
8. A team may have as many coaches with passes as it wishes. However, at the start of the game, a team may declare only three (3) coaches/managers that may be a part of the bench for the game. Removal of the coach/manager by the referee does not permit another coach/manager to join the bench.
9. If the above rules are violated, the referee shall ask the offending party for compliance with the rules. A caution may be issued at this time if the referee deems it necessary. If the offending party refuses to comply the referee shall dismiss the party from the game. A referee has the right to ask the coach to leave the game and he will serve the same suspension as an ejected player. If he refuses, the game will be abandoned. The referee shall report such violation to the State Office in writing.

### **4.4 Substitutions**

1. Substitutions may be made on any stoppage of play with the consent of the referee. Players must be at the half line ready to enter the game.
2. Sponsoring clubs of travel teams U12 and lower, will insure that each player plays at least half of every game.

### **4.5 FRIENDLY Game**

Friendly games can be arranged between coaches. All required procedures must be followed before these games can be played, with single exception of requiring team rosters. Teams can be composed of players possessing currently valid player pass from same club. Any red cards issued in these games will carry over to the next scheduled league game. These games cannot be used to wipe out a red card so the player/coach can play in the next scheduled game.

#### **4.6 Guest Player/ Club Pass**

1. Up to 3 players of an equal or lower age group and Division from within the same Club, not exceeding maximum roster size, are allowed to participate in regular league games.
2. Player passes of guest players are required (see 4.1.2)
3. Any Coach rostered on a team can coach any team within his Club
4. Game ejections need to be served on the primary rostered team
5. Coaches will be issued one single pass

#### **4.7 Game Protest**

The protesting party needs to contact their playing Division Director in writing no earlier than 24 hours after the game, but no later than 48 hours after the conclusion for review and recommendation.

### **Article 5 - Misconduct (Players/Coaches)**

#### **5.1 Misconduct on the Field of Play**

1. Any coach or manager found guilty, after a hearing, of using ineligible players will be suspended for a period of one year.
2. A coach or player participating in a game without a valid pass shall be subject to a hearing. Any coach will be suspended for a minimum of four (4) games.
3. Red Card: One (1) game suspension for the next played league game. (except as in 5.9 below);
4. Two Red Cards (in a season): Three (3) game suspension for the next three (3) played league games;
5. Three Red Cards (accumulated all leagues/tournaments combined, *except US Youth Soccer National Championship Series games*, in a season): Indefinite suspension. The player must appear before the Disciplinary Board before he/she may be reinstated;
6. A red card and its suspensions will be carried over from season to season;
7. Any player receiving four (4) cards (red and/or yellow) in one playing season (September 1 through August 31) shall be subject to a hearing to determine if additional time will be required besides the minimum one (1) game in conjunction with any additional game suspension;
8. Any coach receiving three (3) ejections (equivalent to red card) in a season is automatically suspended for one (1) year;
9. A player or coach who receives a red card/ejection for violent conduct shall be automatically suspended for two (2) games, a hearing may be held to determine if a more serious punishment is needed. If a hearing is not held before the third game following the suspension, the player's/coach's card shall be returned and he/she shall be eligible to play unless or until it is determined otherwise by a hearing that season;
10. If a player or coach receives a red card/ejection and then proceeds to commit verbal abuse or any other offense which, on its own, meets the criteria for a red card offense, the referee shall submit a report and a hearing shall be held to determine if additional penalties shall be imposed.

#### **5.2 Suspension because of Litigation**

1. Any person participating in a PA West Soccer program who becomes a defendant in litigation detrimental to the welfare of youth players or litigation based on activities detrimental to the welfare of youth players, shall be suspended from all soccer-related activities. Suspensions under this rule shall be determined by the Youth Board of Directors. Matters detrimental to the welfare of youth players shall include crimes of moral turpitude and felonies. The person has a right to appeal the suspension only over whether the matter which is the substance of the accusation, if true, is detrimental to the welfare of youth player.
2. On completion of the litigation, the suspended person may inform the body suspending the person under Section 1 of this playing rule that the litigation has been completed and request that the suspension be terminated and the person reinstated. The suspending body may grant the request of the person or, if the decision of the litigation was adverse to the person, may continue the suspension for a period specified by the suspending body, fine the person, terminate all membership of that person with the suspending body and its members, or any combination of those authorized penalties.

### **Article 6 – Recruiting**

Any direct contact from a coach, player, administrator, club/team representative, or parent of a player to another player, parent, or potential player/parent for the purpose of soliciting the registration, try-out, or play of the second player for the first player's team or club.

1. General newspaper ads, public notices, or posters advertising try-out dates are not to be considered recruitment. Phone calls, messages, e-mails, letters (whether bulk mail general type or individual personal), interviews, conversations are considered direct contact recruiting.

2. Once a player has submitted his/her fees and forms to a club, he/she is registered to that team/club and may not be recruited to play on another team within the same division/league.
3. Currently rostered players may not be recruited until the end of the Open tournament (for Divisions 4, 5, and 6 boys and girls) or the State Cup competition (or Regional/National competition if the teams are advancing to those levels) for Division 1 and 2 teams.
4. There is no restriction or limitation upon the times at which a player not rostered or no longer rostered may be recruited.
5. Recruitment, solicitation, or invitation of U11 or younger players to play for a coach, team, or club outside the player's normally recognized geographic area in any venue during any session shall be considered a violation of recruitment.
6. Recruiting violations can lead to disciplinary action against the offending team coach and/or soccer club representatives. If a hearing is requested and the hearing committee finds that a violation occurred it may suspend the team coach and or soccer club representative for a period of up to one year per violation. If more than one player is involved, each player recruited will be considered a separate infraction.

## **Article 7 – Registration/ Rostering**

### **7.1 Registration General**

All players in PA West Soccer club associations must be registered with the State Association for play in PA West sanctioned leagues.

### **7.2 Rostering**

1. All players will be rostered.
2. Tampering or altering a player or coach's pass, validated roster, or birth certificate will result in a minimum of one (1) year suspension for the person or persons responsible. Should a club be involved, the club will also face disciplinary action.
3. Boys may not play on Girls Division teams.
4. No team may play in both Classic and Travel Leagues. A team is considered the same team if there are N (half) plus one (1) players in common on both teams. Teams violating this rule will be suspended immediately from the lower level league of play and will remain suspended until the team meets the requirement of this rule.
5. The Division Director may grant exceptions to Rule 7.2.4 in their respective playing divisions provided the players in question have played for their Sunday club requesting the exception for the last two (2) consecutive playing years.
6. In the rostering of teams in the U14 and younger Divisions 4, 5, and 6, 75% of the players rostered to the team shall be from the generally accepted geographical area of that Club.
7. Players rostered on more than one team must indicate primary team.

### **7.3 PA West Leagues**

All teams will have properly validated rosters listing registered players/coaches/ managers. Teams registered and rostered with PA West Soccer must participate in a league organized, operated, or sanctioned by PA West Soccer.

### **7.4 Team Movement**

Each District and Division Director, subject to the Youth Board approval, has the responsibility to ensure that there is no unfair competitive balance. District and Division Directors reserve the right to move teams between Divisions. The guidelines for these moves include but are not limited to a team's record and the percent of change of the roster from the previous season.

### **7.5 Play Up**

Players are permitted to play up, provided the following criteria are met:

1. The player's club permits players to play up.
2. The player's parents must provide a notarized PA West consent form to the club for which they play only if the player plays up more than one age group. A copy must be sent to the State Office.
3. Age groups are U10 – U12 – U14 – U16 – U19

### **7.6**

1. Any team entering the State Cup Competition/Tournament must play in a sanctioned league whose rules specifically meet the following requirements: U12-U16 rosters are limited to 18 players, except those U12 teams that will play small-sided 8 v 8, maximum 14 player roster; U17 and older may roster up to 22 players, but only 18 may dress for each game;
2. A player playing on more than one team must notify the coach of each team he/she is playing on that



he/she is playing on more than one team;

3. Rostering of coaches can be at any time during the playing season and are not bound to any tournament roster freezes including State Cup or Open Tournament

### **7.7 Minimum Age**

The minimum age for soccer players in PA West Soccer shall be four (4) years old. The age of four (4) must have been reached prior to August 1st preceding the current playing seasonal year

### **7.8 Transfers**

Player transfers between teams during a playing season are based on the level of competition:

1. In-House (Recreational) - no restrictions limiting transfers between teams or clubs;
2. Travel (Competitive or Recreational) - no restrictions limiting transfers between teams or clubs in Divisions 4, 5, and 6 as long as clubs agree providing the affected roster does not fall below 12 players (See exception below 8.6.3);
3. All teams entering the State Cups must comply with all national and State Cup rules;

## **Article 8 - The State Office**

**8.1** The State Office will record all referee reports, injuries, yellow and red cards. Ejected player passes or coach's passes will be retained for the suspension period and will then be returned to the team head coach after the District/Division Director or predetermined designee in case of emergency requests such return.

**8.2** The State Office will provide the state registrar, the playing Division Directors, the District Discipline Board chairperson, and the Hearings and Appeals chairperson with lists of injuries, yellow and red cards. The District/Division Director or Discipline Board chairperson may institute actions against coaches/players/clubs/teams/associations if the record merits such action.

## **Article 9 - Other Protest Procedures, Hearings and Appeals**

Make-up and procedures for District/Division Disciplinary/Hearing Board Committees and Youth Division Hearings and Appeals Committee, in order to best comply with the requirements of the PA West Soccer Constitution, the following rules of competition shall reflect the procedures to be followed for Hearings and Appeals;

1. All decisions rendered by the Youth Board Hearings and Appeals Committee shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the Youth Board, after the expiration of time for appealing the decision of the Youth Board Hearings and Appeals Committee (within ten [10] days of receipt of the decision).
2. Each geographic District and each playing Division shall have a Disciplinary/Hearing Board Committee Chairperson who shall be responsible for receiving the periodic reports of red and yellow card infractions for players in their District/Division, convening a committee to provide a hearing for any discipline invoked under Article 5 or further review the probationary status of any player, coach or team earlier determined. The Disciplinary/Hearing Committee is further authorized to otherwise review the conduct of any player, coach, team, or club in said District/Division to ensure compliance with applicable rules and regulations and acceptable sportsmanship and gentlemanly conduct standards. Said Disciplinary/Hearing Board Committees are empowered to render appropriate penalties or sanctions. While a hearing should occur within 30 days of the triggering reason for the discipline, reasonable efforts shall be undertaken to provide a hearing within 15 days of the invoking of any suspension unless said District/Division wishes to use a scheduled monthly Disciplinary/Hearing Committee meeting for purposes of said hearing. The Disciplinary/Hearing Board shall attempt to hold a hearing and render a ruling before the expiration of a suspension so invoked, but unless as otherwise provided the failure to render a ruling before the expiration of the suspension does not abrogate the suspension. Hearings held at PA West sponsored Tournaments may be held with verbal notice.
3. If a player or coach wishes to appeal a District/Division Disciplinary/Hearing Board disposition or if they are dissatisfied with an action or inaction of PA West Soccer as it affects their playing status or being sanctioned/approved for play or travel and wish to protest this, they may do so by maintaining an Appeal to the Youth Division Hearings and Appeals Committee pursuant to the PA West Soccer Bylaws (see Youth Division Organizational Rules, Chapter 27, and Chapter 7, "Appeals"). The following process is to be followed:

3.1. If an Appeal from a disciplinary action, the Appeal must occur in writing within ten (10) days of receipt of the District/Division Disciplinary/Hearing Board findings. The Appeal must be sent certified mail to the PA West Soccer State Office (with a \$150.00 check from the club) and by certified and regular mail to the Youth Board Hearings and Appeals Chairperson (with copy of check sent to PA West Soccer State Office); the sender shall also obtain a date-stamped "Proof of Mailing" from the U.S. Post Office and maintain the same for review. A detailed statement as to the basis for the Appeal shall be submitted, signed by an appropriate

official of the appellant club. The Hearings and Appeals Chairperson shall review the Appeal, be authorized to conduct fact-finding by reviewing the matter with any of the parties, District, Division, or otherwise, and upon confirming a legitimate Appeal exists and has been properly filed, the Hearings and Appeals Committee will be convened to review the Appeal being taken from the action of the District/Division.

3.2. If a protest or Appeal is being made on a matter not involving action of a District/Division Disciplinary/Hearing Board, the appellant is first to contact the Youth Board President to determine if this is a matter properly reviewable by the Youth Division. If so, the President may refer the matter to the Hearings and Appeals Committee Chairperson for appropriate fact-finding (including, if necessary, the convening of the Hearings and Appeals Committee to include the District/Division Director for the team(s) in question) and ruling, or the President may refer the matter to the Youth Board of Directors for review, or the President may take such action as may be appropriate. If the matter is to be reviewed by the Youth Board Hearings and Appeals Committee or the Youth Board of Directors the same procedures must be followed in the taking of the Appeal as set forth above in subparagraph "1" with the addition that the Youth Board President is to be copied on the Appeal (by regular mail) and 12 copies of all statements, facts and arguments for consideration shall be submitted to the State Office with the Appeal for distribution.

3.3. If an Appeal is taken from the Hearings and Appeals Committee to the Youth Board of Directors, this must occur in writing within ten (10) days of receipt of hearing findings. No further appeal fee must be paid, but the Youth Board may overturn the decision of the Hearings and Appeals Committee only by a three-quarters vote of the total voting members present of the Board of Directors.

3.4. The next level of appeal shall be to the USSF by completing a Notice of Appeal in accordance to USSF procedures (currently USSF Bylaw 705) providing for the party to complete a USSF Notice of Appeal with appeal fee to be submitted within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision rendered by the Adult or Youth Divisions or Referee Committee or other PA West Soccer final decision. The Federation's Appeals Committee has the jurisdiction to approve, modify or reverse decisions.

4. The Youth Division procedures for the taking, hearing and disposition of Appeals are implemented to provide the most convenient forum in which to convene a disciplinary hearing and shall serve to satisfy the Youth Division Organizational Rules embodied in the PA West Constitution, particularly Chapter 27, "Hearings and Appeals Committee," especially insofar as they set forth provisions of the Youth Division (allowed under PA West Soccer Bylaws, Chapter 7, "Appeals, Grievances and Disputes") as to how the Hearings and Appeals Committee/Board shall be composed and allowing periodic disciplinary hearings in each District/Division/League.

5. In the event any District/Division/League is believed by a player, coach, team or club not to be providing a proper and timely disciplinary hearing, the aggrieved shall contact the District /Division/League Director and/or the Youth Division Hearings and Appeals Chairman, who shall rectify the situation by expeditiously convening a proper District/Division/League Disciplinary Board hearing or referring the matter directly to the Youth Division Hearings and Appeals Committee (in which event no \$150.00 appeal fee need be paid for this stage of review).

6. The composition of a District/Division Disciplinary/Hearing Board shall be determined by the Disciplinary/Hearing Board Chairperson in each District/Division with the advice of the District/Division Director; the members of the Disciplinary/Hearing Board shall serve either by special appointment for a given case or date of hearing, or may be generally appointed until replaced. The composition of a Youth Division Hearings and Appeals Committee may include any members appointed by the Hearings and Appeals Committee Chairman, who shall seek the advice of the District/Division/League Director involved, but the final selection of Committee members shall be that of the Hearings and Appeals Committee Chairman. The Hearings and Appeals Committee review/hearing need not be chaired by the Hearings and Appeals Committee Chairperson but shall report to the Hearings and Appeals Committee chairperson.

7. The District/Division Disciplinary/Hearing Board Committee Chair person is responsible to make sure that in all hearings conducted in PA West, the parties shall be accorded:

- Notice of the charges or alleged violations in writing and possible consequences if the charges are found to be true
- Reasonable time between receipt of the notice of charges and the hearing within which to prepare a defense;
- The right to have the hearing conducted at a reasonably convenient time and place so as to make it practicable for the person/entity charged to attend; the State Office shall at all times be considered a reasonable location
- A hearing before an impartial body of fact-finders
- The right to be assisted in the presentation of one's case at the hearing

- The right to present witnesses, evidence, and argument
- The right to be advised of the identity of the evidence the hearing Board/Committee has been given and the right to confront witnesses if called at the hearing
- The right to have a record made of the hearing if desired; the expense is to be borne by the party requesting the record and arrangements must be to the satisfaction of the hearing Board/Committee
- A written decision issued in a timely fashion, with reasons for the decision, based upon the evidence.

### **CLASSIC DIVISION RULES OF COMPETITION**

The Classic Division shall consist of Divisions 1 and 2 and represent the highest level of inter-district club play offered by PA West Soccer Association. Division 3 shall be a level of play in the Youth Division with games scheduled for Saturday play. Divisions 1, 2, and 3 are subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the following rules:

1. Defines the use of tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any like process to roster players selectively to any team on the basis of talent or ability *as permitted*;
2. Limits the participation of players (per transfer rule) previously rostered to another team.
3. Games or practices on Sunday will be only as authorized in these Rules and other applicable rules of PA West Soccer and its Youth Board of Directors.
4. All tournament travel will be governed by applicable PA West Soccer Travel/Division Policies
5. Publish and enforce a body of rules and regulations under which the Division will operate. The US Youth Soccer National Challenge Cup Rules shall be the basis for the Division. The right to add additional playing rules shall be reserved for the Division provided such rules shall be approved by the Youth Board of Directors (in accordance with PA West Soccer Constitution and By-Laws).
6. The club sponsoring a team in Division 1, 2 or 3 shall assume all responsibility which will include financial obligations to PA West Soccer, disciplinary actions, and such other questions that may arise concerning the team's obligations in operating procedures. The team shall be responsible for activities that are related to forming and operating a team, (i.e. fields, referees, players' registration).
7. All Region 1 rules supersede PA West Soccer rules regarding acceptance and participation in all Region 1 sponsored leagues.

#### **Division 1, 2 and 3 Rules:**

##### **1. Age Groups and Structure**

1. Divisions 1, 2 and 3 shall offer leagues in accordance with US Youth Soccer playing rules. (single birth years: U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18, U19) with four (4) teams being required to form a League.
2. The Classic Board may establish programs for ages U9-U10-U11 that will follow PA West U9-U10-U11 guidelines.
3. Classic Clubs are permitted to enter 1 team per age group and gender into either Division 1, 2, or 3
4. Clubs are permitted to field one (1) 8 v 8 and one (1) 11 v 11 or two (2) 8 v 8 teams at U12 per gender.

##### **2. Classic League Team Placement**

1. U11 teams will be placed in one group and must play each other once a season (Fall and Spring). This is a developmental age group. There are no scores kept and no scores posted.
2. All entry level U12 teams shall be placed in one flight. Each team shall have to play each other at least once a season. The top 1-6 teams determined by playing record will then placed in Division 1 and the teams ranked 7-12 in Division 2, the remaining teams will be placed in Division 3.
3. New Classic Club team entries will be placed in Division 3.
4. Any teams sponsored by a Community club and wishing to play in Division 1, 2, or 3 must first enter into Division 4. Promotion will be determined by the teams playing record at the end of the season and recommendation of the Division 4 Director to move up to Division 3 along with the teams desire to move up to division 3. Once teams are in Division 3 these teams are subject to all rules, fees, and procedures related to the Classic Division.
5. Teams accepted into sub regional leagues will be placed in the same league/division the team participated in prior to acceptance, but not exceeding one Year.

##### **3. Division 1, 2, and 3 Relegation & Promotion**

Relegation/ Promotion will take place after every playing season.

For age groups playing in the spring session only, team standings from the previous session played shall be used to determine placement as long as teams have continuity.

#### *Relegation*

- a) The last two teams in Division 1, Division 2 Division 3 are automatically relegated to next lower level. If two teams tie in points for last place they will both be relegated
- b) The last two teams in Division 3 will be regulated to Division 4 (Division 4 will play games on Sundays)

#### *Promotion*

- a) The top two teams in Division 2 and 3 will automatically be promoted to the next division for the following season.
- b) The top two (2) teams in Division 4 will be promoted to Division 3. The team does not have to move up to Division 3 if the team so chooses.
- c) If one or both of the top two (2) teams from Division 4 choose not to be promoted to division 3, no other team from division 4 will be promoted.

#### **4. Points for Season Play**

WIN = Three (3) Points...TIE = One (1) Point ...LOSS = Zero (0) Points

These points will be used to determine standings for the season.

End of Season Tie Breakers: If two or more teams are tied in the number of points the tie will be broken as follows:

1. Winner of head to head competition (not to be used for multi-team ties);
2. Goal differential (goals scored all season minus goals allowed all season). Team with highest differential wins higher position in the standings;
3. Most goals scored in all League season games;
4. Fewest goals allowed in all League season games;
5. The team with the fewest yellow and/or red cards (A red card shall be considered to correspond to two yellow cards) In the event that a game(s) has (have) been forfeited, if any other tied teams played the opponent that forfeited to the other tied team(s), then all the games against the opponent will be omitted before applying the above tie breaker rules.

If three or more teams are tied for a position then the tie breaking rules will be applied to determine the first position among the teams tied and then the tie breaking rules will be reapplied amongst the remaining teams to determine the second position, etc.

#### **5. Forfeiting Division 1, 2, or 3 Games**

Teams forfeiting a regular season game will be referred to the Classic Discipline Chair for review and recommendation to hold a hearing.

#### **6. Sunday Play**

Single Rostered Players - Any team having 100% single rostered players shall be permitted to travel, play, or practice at any time provided they fulfill their scheduled league game requirements. Team having dual rostered players shall not be permitted to play or practice on Sunday after Noon. Under no circumstances shall Sunday practice or games interfere with Sunday League travel games.

#### **7. Division 1, 2 and 3 Tryouts:**

1. Tryouts for Divisions 1, 2, 3, age groups U11-U19 may be held once all age group games and the PA West Soccer State Cup have been completed. Any team/club found holding tryouts before the completion of all league games and State Cup champions have been determined will be referred to the Discipline Chair for review and recommendation.
2. Clubs may sponsor two teams in any single age group in the Division only if they result from current Classic clubs merging provided each team maintains roster continuity of  $N(\text{half}) + 1$ . No additional second teams may be added once the merger is approved.

#### **8. Recruitment Rules**

1. A team may advertise for players to the public through the media or by poster, flyer, or the like, at any time of the year. The State Office will publish try-out schedules on the PA West Soccer web site at the request of all properly registered clubs playing in Divisions 1, 2, and 3.
2. No player nor their family may be offered nor be provided financial inducement as an incentive to tryout for or join a Division 1, 2 or 3 team. This section shall not prevent a team from forgiving fees and expenses in a true financial hardship case if an approval is obtained from the Division Director.
3. There shall be no recruitment of a player who has committed to a club with signed required paper work to a Division 1, 2, or 3 team by another Division 1, 2, or 3 team or its representative from the time the paperwork is signed until the conclusion of the State Cup Tournament.

4. Violation of this rule can lead to disciplinary action against the offending team coach and/or soccer club Representative(s). If a hearing is requested and the hearing committee finds that a violation has occurred, it may suspend the team coach and/or soccer club representative for a period of up to one year per violation. If more than one player is involved, each player recruited will be considered a separate infraction.
5. Clubs may only consider a transferred player during the mid-season transfer window when a roster contains an open position. No player may be released from any team in order to accept a transfer player. Clubs may not release a player due to any monetary requirements by the club.
6. These rules are not intended to place a limitation upon the many times at which a player not rostered or no longer rostered to a Classic Division team may be recruited.

**9. Eligibility and General Rostering Requirements**

1. Each team entering Divisions 1, 2 and 3 will be required to file a team registration form with the State Office by a pre-set deadline to be included in the current league schedule. Any team not filing the on line registration by the required date will not be included in the current league schedule.
2. The PA West Soccer stickered roster and any other form prescribed by the State Office Registrar shall be a team's official entry into Division 1, 2 and 3.
3. Teams will register through the State Office Registrar. The Registrar shall pre-set a date for each session when registrations are due.
4. All PA West Soccer Club, registration and procedures must be met before a team is eligible to participate in Division 1, 2, or 3
5. For purposes of double rosters and team roster continuity, a team is the same as another team when it has N (half) plus one players or more in common.
6. Players may be rostered only to one team in Divisions 1, 2 and 3

**10. Classic release and Transfer of players**

A Parent or guardian may request a release or transfer for a player from and between Divisions 1, 2 or 3 teams during a transfer window from December 1 through January 31.

**11. Obtaining a player release and/ or a transfer:**

1. Before speaking to another teams/clubs coach, player, parent about a team other than what their child is playing on, or asking for a transfer a parent/ guardian must first in writing to the Pa West Classic Division Director ask for a release from the team the player is presently rostered on.
2. When that release is granted, the player may then contact other teams.
3. Once it has been decided what team the player will join, then a transfer is required. A transfer must be requested within the transfer window between December 1 and January 31 Transfers from one classic club to another is a \$150.00. A Fee that must be paid by the club receiving the player to PA West Soccer along with all proper paperwork, before the player may be added to the receiving team's roster.
4. Once the transfer has been granted, the player's original team must present the team roster to the Division Registrar to have the player removed from the roster within four (4) weeks of the date on the letter.
5. No team may accept more than five (5) transfers in a playing season.
6. Teams are prohibited from releasing players to add transferred players during the playing season. Abuse of the transfer rule or improper release of a player can result in hearing.
7. If a hearing is requested and the hearing committee finds that, a violation occurred, it may suspend the team coach for a period of one year per violation.
8. Teams may not transfer from club to club during a playing season (after they have been rostered) until after the State Cup or Regional or National Championship (if they have advanced to such a level).
9. PA West Soccer Playing Rules shall govern play. Should a violation occur, a disciplinary hearing shall be held in accordance with the Youth Division Playing Rules, PA West Soccer Constitution and By-Laws.

**12 Applying for and maintaining Classic Club status:**

A Club may apply to become a Classic Club, if Classic Division drops below 12 Classic Clubs, or if the general PA West youth player registration increases by more than 5000 players (U12-U19) in one playing season. Classic Clubs must have a minimum of 8 teams (U12-U18) entered in Division 3 or above, between both sessions to maintain their status.