

**Greater Northwest  
Soccer Association  
(GNWSA)**

**Articles of Incorporation,  
Bylaws,  
Rules and Regulations**

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# **Greater Northwest Soccer Association- GNWSA Bylaws, Rules and Regulations**

## **1. Articles of Incorporation**

### **1.1 Name**

The name of the organization shall be Greater Northwest Soccer Association, to be referred to as GNWSA or “association”.

### **1.2 Nonprofit Status**

GNWSA shall be a nonprofit Association.

### **1.3 Duration**

The period of duration of GNWSA is perpetual.

### **1.4 Purpose**

The purpose of GNWSA is to create and maintain a youth program based on the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, and courage taught through organized athletic activity. All persons participating in the program shall strive to develop fair play among the youth. Participants include players, parents, coaches, spectators, officials, and other GNWSA volunteers.

### **1.5 Dissolution of the Association**

Should GNWSA dissolve, all funds shall be divided among the members [excluding those under scholarship]. (See definition of member.) Funds will be divided in equal shares to each member, including board members, who are in good standing with the Association and its affiliates at the time of dissolution.

## **2. Bylaws**

### **2.1 Membership in the Association**

#### **2.1.1 Members**

The parents or guardians (limited to two persons per household) of each youth player registered in GNWSA shall be members of GNWSA. Each adult player registered in GNWSA will also be a member of GNWSA. A player registered in GNWSA is defined as a youth or adult player who has completed a GNWSA registration form, submitted proof of age, paid all necessary GNWSA and NTSSA Recreational League dues and fees, and agreed to abide by the rules/regulations of GNWSA and its affiliated organizations. A player who has been granted a refund, regardless of having met all other requirements, will not be considered registered an active member in GNWSA.

An elected Director to the Board or a team coach assigned and approved by the Board of Directors automatically gains membership, regardless of whether the Director or coach has a child registered in GNWSA. Having a child registered in GNWSA and being a Director or coach does not create dual membership. The Director's or coach's household will still be limited to a maximum of two members.

#### **2.1.2 Member Voting Rights**

Other than those granted to the Board of Directors to conduct the business of the Association, member voting rights shall include and be limited to voting in the annual GNWSA Board of Directors elections and voting on Bylaw amendments to the GNWSA Bylaws. Only members in good standing are eligible to vote and may cast one vote per Board position, and one vote per Bylaw amendment.

#### **2.1.3 Members in Good Standing**

Members are considered to be in good standing if all of the following requirements are met:

The member has completed all necessary player forms, including providing a copy of the player's birth certificate or acceptable proof of age, and agreed to abide by the rules/regulations of GNWSA and its affiliated organizations.

The member has paid in full all necessary dues or fees to GNWSA.

The member or their child/player does not have any outstanding disciplinary action against them, or any past disciplinary action against them that prohibits their participation in GNWSA. GNWSA will honor all orders of suspension of players, coaches or referees issued by this Association or any other North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA) Member or United States Soccer Federation (USSF) Member Organization.

#### **2.1.4 Withdrawal of Membership**

The withdrawal of all players in a family constitutes automatic resignation of membership, excluding an active Board member or coach. The resignation of a Board member or coach who does not have a child registered in GNWSA constitutes automatic resignation of membership.

#### **2.1.5 Member/Player Information**

GNWSA membership lists, player rosters, player registration forms, volunteer registration forms, and any other designated league forms are official property of GNWSA and are for the exclusive use of the Association. Unauthorized use or distribution of these items is strictly prohibited.

### **2.2 Governing Body and Volunteers**

#### **2.2.1 GNWSA Board of Directors**

The GNWSA Board of Directors shall be the governing body of GNWSA and shall transact all business and enforce all rules for GNWSA. The responsibilities of the Board of Directors shall include but not be limited to: establishing guidelines for assigning players to teams and developing the necessary related registration guidelines in accordance with NTSSA Team Formation Rules, dividing teams into leagues or divisions thereof, ensuring adherence to playing rules of the Association, establishing rules and policies regarding coaches and volunteers, enforcing the bylaws, rules, and regulations of the Association and the codes of conduct and ethics, acting upon all protests, and handling all disciplinary proceedings. The Board shall also hear all appeals rendered by the A&D Committee. The next level of appeal is to NTSSA or Northern Mid-Cities Soccer League (NMCSL). All Executive Directors of the Board of Directors shall be volunteers and shall not profit from nor receive compensation for their services; however, all Board Members children may be granted scholarships as defined in these Bylaws. All Board members must be in good standing with the Association. The Board shall consist of the following executive and non-executive Directors, with no fewer than five (5) Executive Directors at any given time.

#### **2.2.2 Executive Directors**

The President, Vice President, Appeals and Discipline Director, Treasurer, and Registrar shall be Executive Directors. Executive Directors must have a child or children participating in GNWSA, or previous experience as a GNWSA Board Member. Executive Directors are prohibited from being affiliated with or holding any position of authority (i.e. Board member, coach, or employee) in a soccer league, club, organization or corporation that directly competes with GNWSA.

President: The President shall be the chief officer in charge of the overall administrative functions of GNWSA and he/she shall preside at all association meetings. He/She shall appoint committees as deemed necessary, assign duties to Directors and officers as required, take prudent and reasonable action in circumstances not covered hereby, and shall cast the deciding vote in the event of a tied Directors' vote. The President shall also serve as the GNWSA representative to NTSSA and NMCSL.

Vice President: The Vice President shall succeed to the powers of the President in his/her absence. The Vice President shall be the chairman of the Rules and Bylaws Committee.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be the financial officer of the association and shall collect all monies, keep a detailed account of income and expenses, maintain and reconcile monthly the GNWSA checking account, pay all fees and expenses as authorized by the Board, coordinate the preparation of budgets, and submit a financial report at each meeting. The Treasurer shall be the chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Registrar: The Registrar shall be responsible for maintaining all the registration information for each player within GNWSA and shall forward registration information to NTSSA and NMCSL. The Registrar shall conduct and be responsible for the draw to form teams in each age group. The Registrar shall be the chairman of the Camps and Tournaments Committee.

Appeals and Discipline Director: The Appeals and Discipline (A&D) Director shall succeed to the powers of the President in the absence of both the President and Vice President. The A&D Director shall be responsible for all appeals and discipline actions required within GNWSA and shall serve as a liaison between GNWSA, NMCSL, and NTSSA. The A&D Director shall be the chairman of the A&D Committee.

### **2.2.3 Non-Executive Directors**

All other members of the GNWSA Board of Directors, excluding the Executive Directors, shall be Non-Executive Directors. Non-Executive Directors are not required to have children currently participating in GNWSA.

Secretary: The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings, attend to all correspondence, keep records for GNWSA, perform other work as assigned and notify the Board of Directors and membership of all meetings. Additional duties may include assistance and formatting of any newsletters and mailings as needed. The Secretary shall be the chairman of the Elections Committee. The Secretary will receive voting rights.

Commissioners: Commissioners shall represent the different player age groups as designated by the Board. Commissioners shall be responsible for arbitration of minor issues/infractions involving coaches, assistant coaches, managers, registered players, team representatives and/or teams within their jurisdiction. Problems of a more serious nature shall be reported to the A&D Director. Commissioners may also assume the duties of scheduling games and/or practices for their age group as determined by the Board either in the absence of a Scheduler or to help with scheduling duties. Each Commissioner will receive voting rights.

Scheduler: The Scheduler shall be responsible for scheduling games and/or practices for the various age groups as determined by the Board. One or more Schedulers may be appointed or hired by the Board to divide the scheduling duties among the age groups. The approved scheduler will not have voting rights.

Director of Referee Development: The Director of Referees shall be responsible for recruiting and training all referees and assistant referees and conducting periodic training sessions as required. The Director of Referees must work with a Board approved assignor on all game assignments. The approved assignor will not be a Board member and will not receive voting rights. The Director of Referee Development will receive voting rights.

The following positions will be considered Volunteers at Large and will report to the entire Board. Volunteers at Large shall not be considered Board Members and will not receive voting rights.

Volunteer at Large - Director of Coaches: The Director of Coaches shall be responsible for the procurement, screening, and monitoring of all coaches to maintain the highest possible standards of coaches' conduct. He/She shall be responsible for coordinating coaching clinics and conducting at least two coaches meetings per year. He/She will keep coaches informed on all activities and policies of the Association. The Director of Coaches shall also be responsible for coordinating Risk Management policies as required by NTSSA and NMCSL.

Volunteer at Large - Equipment Director: The Equipment Director shall be responsible for purchasing and distributing uniforms, awards, trophies, and coaching equipment. Responsibilities also include board approved contracting for the maintenance of equipment and necessary items of GNWSA.

Volunteer at Large - Field Director: The Field Director shall be responsible for ensuring the fields are prepared for practice or play in alignment with the start of each season. Responsibilities shall also include coordinating efforts with the towns or governments located within the Association's jurisdiction for the procurement and ongoing maintenance of fields and facilities.

Volunteer at Large - Webmaster: The Webmaster shall be responsible for content and functional upkeep of the GNWSA.com website.

Volunteer at Large - Public Relations Director: The Public Relations Director is responsible for distribution and publication of material and information related to promotional events such as registrations, elections, and other business of GNWSA.

Volunteer at Large - Special Events Director: The Special Events Director is responsible for organization and coordination of fall/spring special activities such as pictures, volunteer appreciation events, etc. and any fundraising activities for the Association.

#### **2.2.4 Assistant Directors**

The Board, at its discretion and on an as needed basis, may approve and/or appoint Assistant Directors to any of the above Director Positions, except the President and Vice President. Assistant Directors shall have membership in the Association but shall not have Board Member voting rights.

### **2.2.5 Standing Committees**

The following committees shall be either appointed or elected, as the case may be, at the first regularly scheduled meeting following the Annual General Meeting. Unless specified otherwise, members of a standing committee must be elected members of the Board of Directors. Members of the Board may either volunteer for a committee and be elected to the committee with a majority vote of the remaining Board members, or they may be assigned to a committee by the President in the absence of volunteers. Vacancies on such committees shall be filled by appointment or election, as the case may be, within thirty (30) days of the vacancy. All committee members must be in good standing with the Association.

A&D Committee –The A&D committee shall be comprised of the A&D Director as Chairman, and at least three (3) other members of the Association, who are not Board Members, chosen by the A&D Director. The A&D committee shall hear grievances and complaints as deemed necessary by the A&D Director.

Budget & Finance Committee–The Budget & Finance committee shall be comprised of the Treasurer as Chairman, and at least two (2) other members of the Board. The Budget & Finance Committee shall be responsible for submitting a proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board of Directors by the close of the May meeting.

Elections Committee –The Elections Committee shall be comprised of the Secretary as Chairman, and at least two (2) other members of the Board. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for the administration and coordination of all efforts related to the annual elections, including the nomination process and the mailing and tabulation distribution of ballots.

Rules & Bylaws Committee –The Rules & Bylaws Committee shall be comprised of the Vice President as Chairman, and at least two (2) other members of the Board. The Rules & Bylaws Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the GNWSA bylaws, rules, and regulations and proposing changes, as required, to such bylaws. The committee shall also be responsible for monitoring USYSA, NTSSA, and NMSCL rules and changes to ensure compliance.

### **2.2.6 Service Committees**

The following committees shall be either appointed or elected, as the case may be, on an as needed basis. Committee members that are not members of the Board shall have the right to attend all meetings and participate in all discussions of the Board but shall have no voting rights therein. All committee members must be in good standing with the Association.

Audit Committee–The Audit Committee shall be appointed by the Board and be comprised of one (1) Board Member as Chairman, and no less than three (3) members of GNWSA but cannot include any signatories on the GNWSA checking account. GNWSA may also hire a third-party firm to act in lieu of the audit committee.



Camps & Tournaments Committee –The Camps & Tournaments Committee shall be comprised of the Registrar as Chairman, and no less than one camp/tournament coordinator for each scheduled camp or tournament. The camp or tournament coordinators are not required to be members of the Board. Other committee members may be assigned as deemed necessary by the Board. The Camps & Tournaments Committee shall be responsible for coordinating, promoting, and overseeing all GNWSA sponsored camps and tournaments.

Other Committees–The Board of Directors may approve other committees as deemed necessary by the needs of the Association.

### **2.2.7 Other Volunteers**

The Board may from time to time invite individuals other than those elected to the Board of Directors to serve the Association on a volunteer basis, without being elected to the Board. The Board reserves the right to withdraw the invitation if the volunteer does not promote or uphold the goals of GNWSA. The Board may, at its discretion, grant player scholarships to such volunteers.

### **2.2.8 Employees & Independent Contractors**

The Board shall be authorized to employ such employees and independent contractors as it deems necessary to carry out the functions of the Association. The term of employment for all employees shall be at Board discretion. Employees and Contractors are subject to Board approval.

### **2.2.9 Conflicts of Interest**

A maximum of two (2) members of the same household, and up to one (1) family member as signatory, may serve on the Board at the same time. Family members are considered immediate or extended whether through birth, marriage, or legal guardian. Spouses and children are allowed to serve provided they meet the minimum age requirements and do not exceed the two-member maximum. Additional family members are allowed to serve as employees or contractors or serve on committees that allow non-Board members.

A Board member may not vote on any item that maybe considered a conflict of interest. This specifically includes any item or issue that will directly affect the Board member, the Board member's family, team, or an affiliated business, league, club, organization or corporation.

Board members are required to sign a conflict of interest form, fully disclose all affiliations that may cause a conflict of interest and abstain from voting on items that may result in a conflict of interest. Refusal or failure to disclose such affiliations and/or refusal or failure to abstain from voting on a matter judged as a conflict of interest, may be cause for dismissal from the Board.

### **2.2.10 Elections**

The Annual Board of Director Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

The Annual Board of Director Elections shall be announced to the membership at least four weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting.

The announcement shall include a proclamation that all Board positions, depending on if the year is odd or even, are open and that any person who desires to run for a Board position must declare their candidacy in writing to the GNWSA Secretary four weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting. The board has the authority to accept or nominate and vote on any non-contested positions at the AGM or any board meeting.

Candidates/Board Members must be at least 18 years old.

A candidate may only run for one Board position per election.

Persons elected to the Board are prohibited from holding more than one Board position at the same time. Directors may run for another Board position at election time, or volunteer and be elected to fill a vacancy on the Board at any time, provided they resign from their current Board position.

GNWSA Directors shall serve two-year terms beginning June 1<sup>st</sup> and ending May 31<sup>st</sup> of the second year. The two-year terms will ensure that the Board has continuity and experience. In even numbered years the following positions shall be opened: President, Treasurer, Appeals & Discipline Director, U4/U5 Commissioner, U5 Commissioner, and U7 Commissioner, U9/U10 Commissioner. In odd numbered years the following positions shall be opened: Vice President, Registrar, Secretary, U6 Commissioner, U8 Commissioner, U11 and Up Commissioner, Adult Commissioner and Director of Referee Development.

Ballots will be sent by traditional mail or electronic mail distributed to all members, sent at least two weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Votes for candidates may be cast in person at the GNWSA Annual General Meeting (AGM), or by the same method of distribution. Ballots submitted not in person must be received within 24 hours prior to the announced start of the AGM. Ballots collected by an individual member and submitted for other members is considered proxy voting and is not allowed under GNWSA rules. Ballots submitted in the aforementioned fashion will not be counted during counting of the ballots. Votes on amendments to the GNWSA Bylaws may only be cast in person at the AGM. All votes shall be submitted on written ballots counted by the Secretary.

The GNWSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held at the Board of Directors Meeting in May.

All members voting at the AGM will be required to show proof of membership.

In order to be elected, a candidate must receive a simple majority vote of the members voting, with a minimum number equal to a quorum of the acting Board of Directors. In the event no candidate receives a simple majority vote, the acting Directors present at the AGM shall be allowed to vote on the two candidates who received the most votes, provided a quorum has been reached. The candidate that receives the most votes from the Board of Directors shall be elected. In the event that a quorum cannot be reached at the AGM, the Board will vote on the two candidates at the next regularly scheduled meeting or by electronic mail.

### **2.2.11 Vacancies**

All vacancies, with the exception of the President, shall be communicated to the membership within fourteen (14) days of the position being vacated. The announcement shall allow at least fourteen (14) days for prospective candidates to respond. Candidates must submit a written statement to the Secretary requesting to be considered for an open position. All candidates shall be given equal consideration and opportunity to present their qualifications to the Board. Provided a candidate or candidates are available for consideration, the Board shall vote on the candidates within thirty (30) days of the announcement of the vacancy. A simple majority is required to fill a vacancy.

### **2.2.12 Attendance**

Directors should notify the President of their plans to attend regularly scheduled Board meetings with no less than 24-hours notice. Any Director not attending two (2) consecutive regular meetings of the Association may have his/her office declared vacant, unless the Board excuses such absences. A three-fourth's (3/4) majority vote of all Board members, excluding the Director involved, is required to take action.

### **2.2.13 Involuntary Removal from Office**

If any member of the Board of Directors willfully neglects their duties to the detriment of GNWSA, they may be required to resign following a vote of no confidence petitioned by the Board. At least four (4) Board members must petition for the vote of no confidence. The petition must be in writing, signed by each of the petitioning Board members, and submitted to the Board. The Board must meet and act on the petition within fourteen (14) days of its receipt. Three-fourths (3/4) vote, excluding the accused, is required to take action.

Any member of the Board of Directors may be required to resign following a vote of no confidence petitioned by the Association membership. At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the Association members must petition for such a vote. The petition must be in writing, signed by each petitioner, and submitted to a member of the Board. The Board shall provide a copy of the petition to the membership within fourteen (14) days of its receipt, with written notice as to the time and date of a vote on the petition. A three-fourth's (3/4) majority vote of the members present and voting, excluding the accused, is required to take action.

Any Board member may be required to resign for refusal or failure to disclose affiliations that cause a conflict of interest, or for refusal or failure to abstain from a vote that may result in a conflict of interest. A three-fourth's (3/4) majority vote of all Board members is required to take action.

#### **2.2.14 Resignations**

Any member of the Board may resign at any time provided they submit their resignation in writing to the President or another Board member. Upon resignation by a Board member, all property items of GNWSA in the possession of the resigning Director shall be returned either to the President or to a location determined by the Board.

### **2.3 Meetings of the Association**

#### **2.3.1 General**

The Board shall hold at least 2 board meetings per soccer season or as necessary as determined by the board, unless otherwise needed. Special Meetings are acceptable. Not holding meetings during slow periods in the soccer schedule, such as during the off-season, is acceptable.

Regular Meetings of the Board of Directors will be held once a month with a minimum number of eight (8) meetings per fiscal year. Each meeting will be called to order no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled start of the meeting. Notice of regular meetings to all Association members, including the Board of Directors, shall be made at least seven (7) days in advance.

Special Meetings may be called at any time by the President, or the Secretary may call a Special Meeting upon the written request (including electronic mail) of a majority of the Board of Directors. Special meetings shall be held to address matters that may arise between regularly scheduled meetings, or that must be handled prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting. Only business for which the special meeting is being called may be addressed at the meeting. Notice of special meetings to all Association members, including the Board of Directors, shall be made at least three (3) days in advance.

Subject to the provisions of applicable statutes and these Bylaws, the President and any three (3) members of the Board of Directors shall constitute an Emergency Committee on matters demanding immediate attention when it is impractical or impossible to call a Board meeting. The Emergency Committee shall report their actions to all Board members in writing or by electronic mail within seven (7) days of the emergency action. The Board shall have the authority to veto any emergency action by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote within thirty (30) days of the action occurring.

### **2.3.2 Meeting Procedures**

Parliamentary procedures (Robert's Rules of Order) shall govern all Board meetings. All regular and special meetings shall be open to GNWSA members, unless the Board deems a closed meeting is appropriate to protect the identity or reputation of a member of the Association. At each Regular Board Meeting, each member of the Board of Directors is required to submit a verbal or written report of activities since the last Regular meeting.

The Secretary shall keep a record of the Board's proceedings at all meetings. These minutes, exclusive of Executive Sessions, shall be accessible only to the members of the Board unless the Board grants permission to a member of the Association to inspect them, or by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Association orders the minutes to be produced and read to the Association.

The Board may go into Executive Session at any regular or special meeting. Only voting Board members may attend an Executive Session. An Executive Session and its respective minutes will be closed to the public.

### **2.3.3 Voting**

The voting rights of the GNWSA Board of Directors shall include voting on all matters necessary to transact the business and enforce the rules of the Association. Voting Board Members shall be allowed to vote in the annual Board of Director elections and on Bylaw and Rule amendments as well.

Each Voting Director shall have one vote. A Board member who is temporarily handling the duties of a vacant Board position, in addition to his/her regular duties, will have only one vote.

The President shall vote only in the case of a tie vote, or to achieve a quorum, or in other specific cases set out herein. Proxy votes will not be accepted; therefore, Board members must be in attendance at the meeting or by phone when the vote is held.

Voting by the Board of Directors via electronic mail will be acceptable for timely matters that were on the current month's Board meeting agenda and postponed at the meeting where a quorum was present; or for matters that do not require in-person discussion by the Board. The electronic correspondence must be sent to all Board members and must follow parliamentary procedures for motioning, discussion and voting. Printed copies of the correspondence and the results of the vote shall be made and become part of the next scheduled Board meeting minutes.

Voting will not take place on any matter unless a quorum is reached.

### **2.3.4 Quorum**

A simple majority of the total number of voting Directors in good standing shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Association. Vacant Board positions will not be counted in determining a quorum. Board members that cannot attend may phone in for the discussion and subsequent vote.

### **2.3.5 Majorities**

Provided a quorum has been reached, and unless otherwise specified, a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors present, and voting is necessary to transact the business of the Association.

## **2.4 Fiscal Responsibility**

### **2.4.1 Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year for GNWSA shall run from September 1 through August 31.

### **2.4.2 Budgets**

The Budget and Finance Committee shall submit a proposed budget for the Association for the upcoming fiscal year for Board approval by the close of the June Board of Director's meeting. The Board must approve the budget by the close of the August meeting.

### **2.4.3 Collection of Fees and Payment of Expenses**

GNWSA will collect player fees to cover NTSSA, NMCSL, municipalities, and other governing body's registration fees and insurance, uniforms, equipment, payments to officials, utilities, awards and trophies, and other miscellaneous operating expenses.

A non-budgeted expense (or cumulative expense), greater than or equal to \$1500 must have Board approval, including necessary and recurring budgeted items such as uniforms, goals, nets, and camp payments.

Board members shall be responsible for expenses related to their Board position. Board members may make a request of the Treasurer to make original payment with GNWSA funds, or the Board member may pay for the expense and receive reimbursement by submitting proper documentation (valid receipts). Expenses that lack proper documentation may be denied reimbursement.

Only those expenses that are necessary for the operation of the Association, or that will become permanent property of the Association, will be reimbursed. Other personal expenses (including cell phones) directly related to GNWSA duties will only be reimbursed with Board approval.

### **2.4.4 Banking Transactions**

The following procedures shall be required for GNWSA checking and banking transactions:

Two signatures shall be required on all GNWSA checks over \$500.

At least three Board member's signatures shall be on file with the bank holding the GNWSA

checking account. One signature shall always be that of the current Treasurer. The second shall be that of the President, and the third to be appointed by the Board.

An individual may not sign or be a signer on a check which is made payable to himself or herself.

#### **2.4.5 Financial Reports**

The Treasurer shall submit a financial report at each Board meeting. The financial report shall include the current bank balance on hand with a description of any major income or expenses pending, the current budget with a comparison to actual incomes and expenditures, and a check register and most current bank statement available for inspection by any Board member.

#### **2.4.6 Audits**

An audit of the books and records of GNWSA must be completed in every even numbered calendar year and shall be performed after the end of the fiscal year, August 31, by the Audit Committee. An audit may also be called at any time by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

The audit will include, but not be limited to, a review of the checking account including expenses paid and income received, adherence to the budget and the bylaws (financial and non-financial aspects), and financial reports and minutes of meetings.

An audit report shall then be written, listing any discrepancies or irregularities, and any recommendations. If there are no discrepancies or irregularities, then it shall be stated. The report shall be read at the October regular meeting and be recorded as part of the October minutes.

### **2.5 Affiliations**

GNWSA shall be affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA), and the Northern Mid-Cities Soccer League (NMCSL). GNWSA shall also be affiliated with other leagues as deemed necessary to conduct league play. GNWSA shall recognize the superseding authority of the rules of NTSSA and its affiliated organizations.

### **2.6 Territory and Jurisdiction**

The territory under the jurisdiction of this Association is defined by NTSSA. GNWSA shall have jurisdiction over all NTSSA recognized soccer players and teams falling within the geographic boundaries of GNWSA as recognized by NTSSA.

## **2.7 Legal Action against the Association**

No organization, member, official, league, club, team, player, coach, administrator or referee may invoke the aid of the courts in the United States or of a state without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate soccer organization, and as provided within the Federation. These bylaws, rules, and regulations do not apply to the commencement of an arbitration proceeding under these bylaws or the USOC (United States Olympic Committee) Constitution and Bylaws or the enforcement of a decision rendered in such proceeding.

For violation of this bylaw, the offending party shall be subject to suspension and fines, and shall be liable to GNWSA for all expenses incurred by GNWSA and its Directors in defending each court action, including but not limited to the following: court costs, attorney's fees, travel expenses, reasonable compensation for time spent by Directors responding to and defending against allegations in the action including discovery and court appearances, and expenses incurred for holding meetings necessitated by the court action.

## **2.8 Indemnification**

Directors may not be held individually liable for actions undertaken within the scope of GNWSA business. All real and personal property assets of past and present GNWSA Board members shall be considered exempt from any civil action which might be brought forth against GNWSA so long as the Director acted in good faith.

## **2.9 Ratification**

These GNWSA Bylaws, Rules, and Regulations supersede all previous Bylaws and Amendments and have been ratified and adopted on May 21, 2015.

## **2.10 Amendments to the Bylaws**

Amendments to the GNWSA Bylaws must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all GNWSA members present and voting at the GNWSA Annual General Meeting (AGM), provided a quorum has been reached. The President shall be allowed to vote on amendments. Only Board or Committee members may make a proposal for an amendment and all proposals must first be submitted to the Rules and Bylaws Committee. The proposal must be made in writing and must be received by the Committee at least thirty (30) days in advance of the AGM. The Rules and Bylaws Committee shall then review the proposal for compliance with other Bylaw provisions and make recommendations as needed. The GNWSA Secretary shall provide written notification to the Association membership of any proposed Bylaw amendments at least fourteen (14) days prior to the AGM. Amendments must be documented in the minutes of the meeting.



## **3. Rules and Regulations**

### **3.1 Youth Recreational Player Registration**

#### **3.1.1 General**

Registration shall occur twice yearly in accordance with the GNWSA Fall and Spring soccer seasons. Registration for a given season shall begin no earlier than allowed by NTSSA (unless special permission is granted by NTSSA) and shall end no later than the first day of the season. Exceptions may be made for teams that are below minimum roster. No players may be added to any team after the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of the current season. The Registrar shall determine the specific dates and times of registration. The GNWSA Board shall have full discretion in determining registration fees per player, early registration discounts, late registration fees, and the appropriate deadlines for registration and fee payments. Registration will be online or as determined by the GNWSA Board.

#### **3.1.2 Age and Residence Requirements**

The time frame used to determine age of eligibility for the soccer playing year for GNWSA runs from January 1 to December 31, inclusive. A player may register if they are 3 years old by June 30<sup>th</sup> to play in the Fall soccer season.

#### **3.1.3 Forms and Proof of Age**

A properly executed registration form shall be filed for each player on every team registered with GNWSA at the beginning of each soccer season.

The registration form shall contain a pledge by the player or parents/guardians that they will abide by the Bylaws, Rules, and Regulations of GNWSA and its affiliated organizations, along with parent/ guardian permission for necessary medical treatment for the player. The registration form shall also serve to release GNWSA and its affiliated organizations of liability.

All new GNWSA players are required to provide proof of age when they register. Proof of age shall consist of a copy of an official birth certificate, or birth registration, issued by an appropriate government agency, or other documentation acceptable under NTSSA guidelines. Confirmation of proof of age will be recorded in the player's registration record, and any copies of proof of age records will be destroyed by the Registrar. The GNWSA Registrar may request re-verification of a player's age at any point during his/her participation in the GNWSA program. Failure to provide proof of age for verification or re-verification purposes may result in the immediate suspension of a player's participation until proof of age is provided to the GNWSA Registrar.

A player is not considered registered with GNWSA until he/she has completed in full a current registration form, his/her parent/guardian has signed the registration form, proof of age has been submitted to and accepted by the GNWSA Registrar, and all necessary fees or dues (either paid

in full or in a timely manner as required by an incremental payment plan) have been paid. A player may not participate in any practices or games until they are considered registered with the Association.

### **3.1.4 Refunds** – Refunds of registration fees will be permitted as listed below.

Either full refunds or the offer to apply the received payment towards the following season, will be granted for a team not forming due to lack of registrants or if the refund is requested before the close of regular registration.

Partial refunds or the offer to apply the received payment towards the following season, of a maximum of 50% of the total fee paid will be granted for: 1) a team choosing to disband prior to the first week of the season; 2) a child withdrawing for medical reasons prior to the first week of the season; 3) a child moving out of the area prior to the first week of the season; or 4) a refund request one week prior to opening weekend of their particular age group.

The first week of the season will be determined based on the GNWSA and NMCSL game schedule for the applicable season and shall be based on the calendar week in which “Opening Day” occurs.

### **3.1.5 Scholarships**

Board members and other volunteers who are not Board members, but who volunteer their time or resources to the Association, may be eligible for player scholarships, at the Board’s discretion, and are limited to a maximum of one scholarship per season of volunteering for a youth. In addition, registration for Adult leagues will be at a cost of 50% of the regular registration fee. Board member scholarships are contingent upon the Board member attending at least fifty percent (50%) of the regularly scheduled Board meetings in a given season, unless the Board excuses his/her absences. If two members of the same household serve on the Board during the same season, each member is entitled to a player scholarship. No player or lifetime limits apply to Board or other volunteer scholarships.

Financial assistance (scholarship) is available for GNWSA members who may be facing financial hardships. Financial assistance (scholarship) will be granted on an as needed basis and may include full or partial exemption of the early or regular registration fee for the season. A Financial assistance (scholarship) application form must be filled out and submitted to the Registrar prior to registration. Financial assistance (scholarship) request must be made during early or regular registration. Financial assistance (scholarship) must be approved by the Board.

The parents/guardians of a player granted financial assistance (scholarship) may be asked to volunteer during the season. Volunteer opportunities may include help with the fields or equipment or help with other duties as deemed necessary by the Board.

## **3.2 Coach and Volunteer Registration**

### **3.2.1 General**

A head coach shall be defined as the primary person responsible for the development, instruction, training, practice schedule, and game schedule of a team and its players. An assistant coach shall be defined as a person who assists the head coach with the team responsibilities outlined above. An assistant coach should be prepared to handle team responsibilities in the absence of the head coach. A Team Manager shall be defined as a person whose duties may include but may not be limited to coordinating a team call list, game snacks or refreshments, and team parties or celebrations.

### **3.2.2 Eligibility and Requirements**

Coaching in GNWSA is a privilege, not a right. As such, GNWSA, in its discretion, reserves the right to refuse or remove a previously assigned coach, to allow any individual wishing to serve in such capacity, as long as the basis for such refusal or removal is not prohibited by law. A person may volunteer to coach or be asked to coach by the GNWSA Board. Volunteering does not guarantee an individual will be assigned as a head coach, assistant coach or team manager, nor does it guarantee that an individual will be assigned in the position requested.

Only individuals who will promote and uphold the purposes and goals of GNWSA as set forth in the GNWSA Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, abide by the GNWSA Zero Tolerance Policy, NMCSL Bylaws, and abide by the NTSSA Code(s) of Conduct will be considered eligible to coach in this Association, as determined by the Board, in its sole discretion. Coaches who fail to function within the GNWSA Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, GNWSA Zero Tolerance Policy, NMCSL Bylaws and/or NTSSA Code(s) of Conduct will be subject to immediate review by the Board, and at the discretion of the Board, may be subject to disciplinary action, to include potential removal. Destructive behavior, as determined by the Board, will be subjected to review by the Board, may be subject to disciplinary action, to include potential removal. For the purpose of clarification, anything other than positive reinforcement and comments, at any time, whether verbal, written or via any channel, including social media, to any player, coach, referee or spectator within GNWSA or other NTSSA associations will be prohibited.

### **3.2.3 Forms**

All persons intending to coach or volunteer with GNWSA are required to register, prior to receiving access to the roster and assisting with practice or games. Registration includes completing the appropriate Volunteer Registration Form, signing the form, which may be done electronically, and agreeing to abide by the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of GNWSA and its affiliated organizations. The volunteer must also complete the appropriate Risk Management Form. Upon request, a volunteer may be asked to submit a copy of a valid photo ID. Background checks are mandatory for all coaches, assistant coaches, and team managers as required by NTSSA.

### **3.3 Coaching Assignments**

#### **3.3.1 General**

Only persons who are eligible to coach and who have duly registered with GNWSA and passed the mandatory NTSSA background check shall be assigned to teams with the Board of Directors having the authority to oversee the coaching assignments and take necessary action in the event of any conflicts with a coaching assignment. One head coach will be assigned per team. The head coach shall then have the discretion of assigning assistant coaches and a team manager for his/her team. GNWSA does not allow having more than three team officials (head coach, assistant coach, and team manager) on the sidelines during games to avoid player confusion. All assistant coach and team manager assignments are subject to screening by the GNWSA Director of Coaches and/or the GNWSA Board.

GNWSA coaches shall be volunteers. Paid coaches are prohibited in GNWSA recreational soccer. However, an expert in one or more aspects of the game may be requested to assist the team on occasion provided participation by the players is optional, not mandatory, and any payments requested for such assistance are paid for by the coach or parents and not GNWSA.

All team officials must be in good standing with GNWSA and NTSSA. The Board of Directors reserves the right to review team official assignments from time to time. If the Board determines there are potential disciplinary issues with any coach, assistant coach, or team manager, the person shall be subject to immediate review by the Board, and at the discretion of the Board, may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **3.3.2 Coaching Status**

Head coaches will generally, at the sole discretion of the Board, be allowed to retain their coaching status with a team from season to season. Head coaches shall have the discretion of keeping the same assistant coach or coaches from season to season or assigning new one(s).

In order for a head coach to retain coaching status with a given team, the coach must have Board approval and the team must have fifty percent (50%) of the recommended roster size for the current season (a nucleus) returning to that team, and the head coach must be in good standing with the Association. A team without a nucleus of players may be folded or combined with another team and the coach may not retain coaching status.

If two or more teams are combined in the draw, a new head coach will be assigned using the following guidelines.

If only one of the head coaches from the combined teams wishes to return as head coach, then that coach shall remain as head coach.

Whether for merging teams or new team formations, if more than one of the head coaches wishes to return as head coach (for merging teams) or there are two parent volunteers to serve as head coach for the newly formed teams, the GNWSA Board shall confer with the individuals to determine which coach shall be the head coach and which coach shall assist. If an agreement cannot be reached, then neither of them will be considered for the position. One or both of the coaches may be asked to coach another team in the same age group if that team does not have a coach.

If none of the head coaches wishes to return, or if an agreement between the previous head coaches cannot be reached, any of the previous assistant coaches may be assigned as head coach, subject to Board approval.

If a head coach resigns during the season, one of the assistant coaches shall be assigned as a head coach.

If a head coach sits out a season, he/she will not retain coaching status with their former team. Coaching status shall pass to whoever coaches the team in the former coaches' absence.

### **3.3.3 Coach Certification**

All GNWSA head coaches are strongly encouraged to have the minimum coaching certification for the age group to which they are assigned as recommended by NTSSA and/or USSF. GNWSA shall reimburse a head coach once only for the cost of acquiring the minimum level certification for coaching U8 and below and once only for the minimum level certification for coaching U9 and above. An assistant coach, who has coached for more than two seasons, may also be reimbursed for coaching certificates similar to the head coach as mentioned above. Any additional coaching certifications or training will be at the individual's discretion and will not be reimbursed by GNWSA. Association conducted group training may be paid for by GNWSA at the discretion of the Board. Assistant coaches are encouraged to achieve certification but without reimbursement from the Association.

### **3.3.4 Coach Responsibilities**

Every head coach is required to attend the preseason coach's meeting or send a designated team representative, unless a coach is determined after the meeting was held. If a head coach or designee is unable to attend, they must agree to meet (either in person or via a phone call) with the age appropriate Commissioner to receive the necessary meeting information, including determining field selection, team uniform, ect. The coach who is unable to attend or send a designee may not pre-select practice fields, team names, uniforms etc prior to the meeting.

All head coaches and assistant coaches are required to read, be knowledgeable of, and abide by the GNWSA Bylaws, Rules, and Regulations and the rules of its affiliated organizations, including the NTSSA Code of Ethics for Coaches and the FIFA Rules of the Game.

Coaches are allowed to call or contact players that were on their roster in either of the two previous seasons to remind them about registrations and registration deadlines, provided that the coach contacts or attempts to contact every player on the roster. Coaches may not deliberately omit calling a player, knowingly and/or willingly drop a player from their roster or advise a player not to play for their team, whether through direct contact or coercion. Recruiting players in any manner that violates NTSSA recruiting rules is strictly prohibited in GNWSA recreational soccer.

A coach must accept all eligible returning players unless he/she can show ample proof that the player is a disciplinary problem and disruptive to the team. GNWSA Board approval is required for a player to be dismissed from a team.

Coaches are responsible for the eligibility of their players. Knowingly playing an ineligible player will result disciplinary action against the coach and the team forfeiting all games in which the ineligible player participated. The official team roster, signed by the coach and the GNWSA Registrar, determines player eligibility.

All coaches are responsible for the care and maintenance of GNWSA property and equipment issued to them. GNWSA property or equipment shall be issued to the head coach only. The head coach is responsible for the return of such property to GNWSA upon his/her completion of coaching duties. Head coaches shall be allowed to keep equipment in their possession from season to season, provided they keep their status as head coach. If a head coach loses his/her status for any reason, he/she must return all GNWSA property and equipment in his/her possession within a reasonable time. Any equipment that is in disrepair due to normal wear and tear must be reported to the GNWSA Board for replacement. Any equipment damaged by a means other than normal wear and tear is the coach's responsibility and may be subject to being replaced at the coach's expense.

All coaches are responsible for distributing team uniforms, provided by the Association, to their players.

The head coach and assistant coaches of record are to be active coaches for the team and not in name only.

### **3.3.5 Removal of a Coach**

A coach's invitation to coach may be revoked, by the Board, if he/she does not promote and uphold the goals of GNWSA and as described in Section 3.2.2.

After one (1) written complaint against himself/herself from any individual, the respective age group commissioner and/or Director of Coaches may elect to have a discussion with the coach regarding such complaint. The first discussion shall be deemed an informal warning, not documented by writing.

After two (2) written complaints against himself/herself from any individual, the respective age group commissioner and/or Director of Coaches may elect to have a discussion with the coach regarding such complaint. The second discussion shall be deemed a formal warning and shall be documented in writing with a report being provided to the Board.

If any coach receives three (3) written complaints against himself/herself or any member of the team or one (1) written complaint from a GNWSA Director or official (referee), the coach will be subject to review by the A&D Director and may be required to go before the A&D Committee for judgment of fitness to continue coaching youth soccer. These complaints must be made on separate occasions, and may include misconduct reports from referees, written complaints from other coaches or parents, or written complaints from a coach or parent/member of another Association.

The coach shall have the right to be present at any A&D proceedings.

### **3.4 Youth Recreational Teams and Team Formation**

#### **3.4.1 General**

The GNWSA recreational youth league shall be comprised of teams divided into age groups according to the official NTSSA age chart and shall be limited as follows:

| Age Group         | Minimum Roster | Maximum Roster |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Under 4-Under 8   | 6              | 8              |
| Under 9-Under 10  | 10             | 12             |
| Under 11-Under 12 | 12             | 14             |
| Under 13-Under 14 | 14             | 18             |
| Under 15-Under 20 | 14             | 22             |

In the event that we do not have sufficient players to form a new team, players may be added to existing teams above the maximum roster, with Board approval, as long as the roster does not exceed twice the number of players allowed on the field.

#### **3.4.2 Player Status**

Returning GNWSA players from the previous season are said to have returning player privileges, provided they register prior to team formation, also referred to as the Draw. Returning GNWSA players registering after team formation can be added back to their team IF space is available on that team and all other teams in the age group are at minimum roster.

Returning GNWSA players who skip one season also have return to team privileges, second to players returning from the previous season. If a player who skipped one season requests to return to their previous team and the team is being combined in the current season the player's returning privileges shall transfer to the new (or combined) team only if space is available on that team. If a player who skipped one season requests to return to their previous team and the team

was folded in the prior season or will be folded in the current season the player will not have returning player privileges with any team and will be placed in the player pool.

Any returning GNWSA player who wishes to change teams within the same age group may request to be placed in the player pool for that age group during the registration process. The player, for team placement purposes, will be considered a new player and placed on a team following Team Formation and Order of the Draw rules.

Any player who refuses a team assignment shall be placed in the bottom of the player pool and will be reassigned to a different team only if space is available. The player may only be reassigned to a team that has fewer players than the team that was refused.

If a player has not attended a practice or contacted the head coach as of opening weekend (GNWSA Opening Saturday for U4-U8, NMCSL Opening weekend for U9+), the player may be released from the team and a player from the waitlist may be added to the team as determined by the Board. No refund will be granted to the non-participating player.

### **3.4.3 Special Requests**

U4 through U6 registrants **NEW** to GNWSA may request to play with **ONE** existing or new player. Special requests will be granted only when possible. Special requests for team placement or coach preference **do not apply** to returning players in any age group. Player/Player's requests that do not fit the aforementioned criteria will be disregarded. GNWSA will attempt to meet all valid special requests made, but in some circumstances may be unable to grant a request. Players with valid special requests which were not met will receive notification as such following the conclusion of the Draw.

A player may request to play up an age group (soccer year) and will be treated, for purposes of team assignment, as a new player and placed into the player pool of that age group. Players requesting to play up may not request a specific team, outside of U4 or U5 players. Players that are U6 and requesting a specific U7 team do not meet the special requests guidelines. Players may also be moved up an age group at the discretion of the GNWSA Registrar when deemed necessary to fill teams or to move a player off the waiting list. The Registrar shall obtain permission from the player's parents/guardians before moving a player up and confirm the move with the age group Commissioner. A player who has played up must continue to request to play up via their registration or they will be returned to their appropriate age group. This applies whether the player wishes to remain on their existing team or return to the player pool. A player may also request via their registration to move back down to his/her age group. Players that wish to play up 2 or more years will need board approval.

NTSSA Youth Commissioner approval is required for a player to play in a lower age group. A player with significant mental or physical deficiencies may petition NTSSA for permission to play one age group lower; however, the player must not be of a physical size which will provide an undue advantage over the other players in the younger division.



A player may request to play on the same team with a sibling. The siblings will be placed on a team in the oldest sibling's age group, and all GNWSA and NTSSA rules regarding playing up must be followed. The siblings will be placed in the player pool and drawn from the pool together only if space is available in the oldest sibling's age group; otherwise the players will be placed in the age appropriate player pool. Siblings shall not be allowed to take an existing or returning player's spot on a team; nor will siblings be allowed to take a spot on the team if there are other players on the waitlist or in the player pool who are of the appropriate age for the team.

Only a head coach of a team may request to have their child assigned to their team roster provided the player meets the age requirements of the team, and provided the request is made prior to the team roster being finalized. A coach's child shall not be allowed to take an existing or returning player's spot on a team.

### **3.4.4 Team Formation**

Teams wishing to remain intact from the previous season will be allowed to do so provided a nucleus of players exists. A nucleus of players shall be defined as the total number of returning players being equal to or greater than fifty percent (50%) of the minimum roster size for the team's current season age group. A team with the required nucleus shall be considered a returning team and shall keep their team name even if the coach does not return.

Teams that fail to maintain a nucleus of players may be combined with another team who may or may not have also met minimum roster, or the team may be folded (disbanded) with the returning players from that team placed in the player pool. The Registrar and/or the GNWSA Board shall have discretion in deciding whether a team shall be combined or folded.

A head coach of a team may request to have their team move up into the next age group. The team must have at least the minimum required number of players on the roster for the age group in which they are requesting to play, and all the team parents must agree in writing via individual printed letters to play up. The request must be made prior to the Draw and the League's scheduling meeting.

In accordance with NTSSA Rules, a GNWSA team may make a request to compete in a league conducted by another Association either for higher competition, or if GNWSA does not offer competition in the team's particular age bracket. If the request is granted, the team must register and pay all fees and insurance due NTSSA through GNWSA, and then be released to compete in the other Association. If the request is denied, further appeal may be made to NTSSA. This rule does not apply to competitive teams.

Any team outside GNWSA, that wishes to participate in the GNWSA program, shall be allowed to do so in accordance with their home Association and NTSSA rules.

### **3.4.5 The Draw**

The term “Draw” refers to a random selection of players from a pool. A random Draw is the method by which teams are filled without taking into account a player’s size, ability, etc. The Draw allows players to be assigned at random to teams to prevent stacking of teams in any age group, division, or league. Other criteria, such as geographic location, school, etc, may also be taken into consideration when forming teams.

Team rosters are subject to change following the Draw and may not be finalized or official until released to the coaches; therefore, the results of the Draw, including player assignments and team formations, shall not be discussed with or made available to anyone outside the Board of Directors prior to the preseason coach’s meeting, except when necessary to assign coaches or fill teams to minimum roster.

Any member of GNWSA who wishes to question the outcome of the Draw, or who wishes to lodge a complaint about any step in the process of the Draw, may do so, in writing, in the following order only: GNWSA Registrar, GNWSA A&D Director, GNWSA Board of Directors, and NTSSA Youth Commissioner.

### **3.4.6 Order of the Draw**

A recreational youth player shall be assigned to an age group according to their date of birth and NTSSA guidelines. Provided enough players exist in the player pool, GNWSA shall form separate boys and girls teams and pure age teams. If enough players do not exist in the player pool, GNWSA reserves the right to form co-ed teams and/or combine age groups in accordance with NTSSA rules.

This would confirm for players wishing to play up that space is available and place them up as requested or if space is not available, return them to team and/or existing age draw. GNWSA will consider geography and coaching needs when possible. The order of the draw shall take place as follows per age group:

#### **I. Existing Teams**

A. Returning players who played the previous season and have requested to stay on their team will remain on the roster.

B. Players who have not registered during early or regular registration or have requested to be removed from their team and placed into the player pool will be removed from the roster.

C. Players returning after missing one season and requesting to return to their team are added to the roster if space is available. If space is not available, they will be placed in the player pool.

D. If a team meets minimum roster after A-C, then they will remain together on an existing team.

#### **II. Determination if New Teams Need to be Created**

A. After I is complete, a total of slots remaining to fill all existing teams to maximum roster is determined.

B. If the remaining players from the pool does not exceed the available slots on existing teams, those players will be placed on existing teams.

C. The Registrar, with Board approval, will have the option to not open late registration for any additional players in the age group. Based on inquiries OR geographic need, the Registrar may open registration for that age group with the focus of creating a new team.

### III. Placement on Existing Teams from Player Pool

A. If it is determined in II that the slots on existing teams are equal to or more than the total number of players in the player pool, the following order shall occur.

B. Teams shall first be evened out based on alphabetical order of team name while taking into consideration geographic locations of the players. An effort will be made to place newly registered players on teams with individuals within their school boundaries.

C. One player shall be added based on registration date to each team until the numbers are equal on all existing teams.

D. If in the order, a player would be put on a team they requested to not return to from the previous season, the player would be placed on the next team in order and the next player would be placed on the previous team.

E. Once equal, players will be added to teams in alphabetical order (Alligators, Bears, Cheetahs, etc.)

F. If there are still slots available after all players have been placed from the player pool, the Registrar may open late registration to fill those remaining slots to put all teams in the age group at maximum roster.

### IV. New Teams

. If it is determined that there are more players than slots available, the Registrar may decide to add an additional team or teams to the age group.

B. New Teams will be first looked at geographically (examples: Argyle, Haslet, Justin) and the player pool will be reviewed to determine if enough players exist to form a geographically based team. Additionally, elementary, middle or high school may be considered when creating a team.

C. If there are enough players geographically or from an elementary, middle, or high school to form a new team or teams, those players will be placed on the new team or teams first based on registration date.

Then the draw would proceed as noted in III. B-F.

C. If a new team is formed without enough players to be geographically or elementary, middle, or high school based, the new team would follow the draw as noted in III. B-F.

The new team would be listed as New Team in the alphabetical rotation (Alligators, Bears, Cheetahs, New Team, Sharks, etc.)

The Registrar shall have the authority to finalize the Draw at the end of the published registration timelines. The results of the Draw will be presented to the Board in monthly report(s) following the Draw.

After all teams in an age group have reached maximum roster all remaining players will be placed on a waiting list.

The Registrar shall administer the player waiting list. Players on the waiting list will be placed on teams in their age group or one age group up, with permission of the player's parent/guardian, in order of registration date. The waiting list shall be abandoned after rosters are finalized and submitted to NTSSA, with any fees collected from non-placed players being refunded.

Any player who has been assigned outside common geographical standards, as determined by the Board in their sole discretion, shall be contacted by the appropriate age level commissioner to determine if the player is willing to join the team or would like to request a refund per the Refund Policy.

### **3.4.7 Teams below Minimum Roster**

The head coach of any team that remains below minimum roster after the Coaches Meetings, shall be allowed to actively seek players of the proper age group within GNWSA boundaries, or with a release from the player's home association, to be added to their team until minimum roster is met, provided the player is not currently registered on an existing recreational team and the coach does not violate any USYSA, NTSSA, or GNWSA recruiting rules. Once minimum roster is met, then additional recruited players will be placed into the player pool and the rules of the Draw will be followed.

Players may be sought for the player pool until enough players exist for the team to reach maximum roster size. Players may only be added until the opening weekend of the season.

Teams will be allowed to remain below minimum roster for the season only with Board approval, and only in extraordinary circumstances. Refunds will be granted following the refund policy.

### **3.4.8 Equipment and Uniforms**

GNWSA shall supply all new teams with the basic necessary equipment to conduct practices and games. Additional equipment may be purchased by the coach without reimbursement.

Subject to approval by the GNWSA Board, head coaches shall be allowed to choose team colors every fall season and for U8 and under, shall be allowed to change the team name prior to any season provided adequate notice is given to the Association. For U9 and up teams, team names may only be changed after the draw and no later than 3 weeks prior to any season provided adequate notice is given to the Association.

GNWSA shall supply each player with a team uniform, consisting of a jersey, short, and socks every fall season or in the spring season if the player did not play in the fall. All GNWSA teams shall wear all their GNWSA issued jersey. Failure of a team or player to wear the proper jersey during a game may lead to disciplinary action against the coach or player, to include removal from the field.

All player jerseys, except goalies, must be numbered on the back. For safety reasons, player names are not allowed on the jerseys.

Permanent alterations to the uniform are prohibited. Minor additions to the uniform that may pose a safety concern (barrettes, pins, etc.) are also prohibited. The referee shall have the final say on whether a player's uniform poses a hazard to other players.

Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn at all practices and games. Athletic socks must cover the shin guards. Players not wearing shin guards will not be allowed to participate.

Metal cleats, toe cleats, or baseball cleats are not permitted. Tennis shoes are allowed in place of soccer cleats.

Goalkeepers must wear a different colored shirt to designate him or her as a keeper.

Absolutely no jewelry shall be permitted. All jewelry must be removed for practices and games. Band-aids covering earrings or piercings are not acceptable and will not be allowed.

Medical casts shall be allowed provided they are adequately wrapped to protect the individual and other players on the field.

In the event of a jersey/color conflict, the home team shall be responsible for changing jerseys, or covering their jerseys with aprons, bibs, or other apparel that the referee determines to be adequate to correct the color conflict. The players will then be allowed to play without numbers on their jerseys provided that they still wear their numbered jerseys underneath. The referee shall determine if there is a jersey/color conflict and if the home team has corrected the conflict. The referee's decision is final.

### **3.4.9 Practices**

Head coaches may schedule team practices through the Association provided adequate practice field space and time slots are available. After the Board Members who are coaches have selected practices, all coaches will be given equal opportunity to schedule practices at an agreed upon time by the Association. Preferential treatment or early reservations will not be allowed. The coach must notify the Association of any changes in practice schedules that may occur during the season in order to prevent any potential conflicts with other teams' scheduled times or location assignments. GNWSA reserves the right to limit practice days and duration times.

All coaches are responsible for ensuring that the area of play for team practices is free of any potentially dangerous hazards, and that the field conditions are safe.

If practice field space or time slots are not available, a team may practice at another location. GNWSA cannot be held responsible for the condition or safety of alternate locations.

Practices may not be held when the practice fields are closed, on GNWSA designated fields. Coaches are required to cancel their practices in the event of inclement weather or unsafe playing conditions regardless of whether the fields have been closed. Teams are required to stay off the practice fields until they are re-opened. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Practices on the Association's designated game only fields are strictly prohibited, except where allowed for field reservation sign-ups (i.e. Harmony Park, etc.) Scrimmages held at game fields without proper approval from both the town and the Association are also prohibited.

### **3.5 Youth Recreational Games and League Play**

#### **3.5.1 Locations**

All GNWSA sanctioned games must be played on GNWSA or League approved game fields, unless the Association has granted special permission to conduct a game on a practice field or at another location.

#### **3.5.2 Field Closures**

The Association will abide by the field closure decisions of the town or league where practice or game fields are located. Teams are required to stay off the fields until they are re-opened. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Referees may close the game fields immediately prior to or during games. If this occurs, the referee will ask each team to leave the field and will announce that the fields are closed. Teams are required to respect the referee's decision and leave the game fields until they are re-opened. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

#### **3.5.3 Division Assignments**

In GNWSA affiliated leagues, U9 and above teams may be divided into divisions according to standings. In the absence of league rules governing the division assignments, GNWSA shall use the following guidelines. Exceptions may be made in cases where player or coaching changes have occurred on the roster, or in other circumstances as determined by the Board.

New teams, or teams new to an age group, will be assigned to divisions based on coach requests and the total number of teams in the age group. Coach requests for division placement of new teams will be granted when possible but cannot be guaranteed.

Returning teams shall be assigned to divisions based on the standings from the prior season.

Returning teams that placed in one of the top two places of their former division will be moved up one division if available.

Returning teams that placed in one of the bottom two places of their former division will be moved down one division, if available.

Returning teams that did not place in either the top two or the bottom two places of their former division will remain in their former division.

#### **3.5.4 Schedules and Reschedules**

Special scheduling requests for game times and dates cannot be guaranteed, especially in the U9 and above age groups. Any special requests should be made prior to the season.

Games may only be scheduled and rescheduled through the Association or League.

Individual games will only be rescheduled due to weather, or unforeseen school or religious events. Games will not be rescheduled for a coach scheduling conflict. An Assistant Coach should coach a game if the Head Coach is unable to attend.

A team's head coach must give reasonable notice (no less than seventy-two (72) hours) to the Association if his/her team will be unable to play a scheduled game due to just cause. The Association or League will then decide whether to issue a forfeit or reschedule the game.

League rules governing game reschedules for U9 and above games shall take precedent over Association rules in the event of a conflict.

#### **3.5.5 Game Postponement, Suspension, or Abandonment**

The referee may postpone a game a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes to allow a coach to field the minimum number of players to play the game. If the fifteen (15) minutes lapse without both teams having the minimum number of players, the referee shall call abandon and report the game. If one team plays with the minimum required number of players, the opposing team is not required to play short. However, in the interest of sportsmanship, the coach may choose to play the same number of players as the team playing with only the minimum.

The referee may postpone a game a maximum of thirty (30) minutes to allow inclement or threatening weather to pass, at which time the game must either begin or be abandoned. Teams must report to the field ready to play regardless of the weather, unless their respective member Association has notified the coach of the team prior to game time or posted/announced game postponements or reschedules prior to game time.

Suspension of a game, regardless of cause, shall be limited to a maximum of thirty (30) minutes, at which time the game must either be resumed or abandoned.

U9 and above teams shall allow a referee fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled game time to report before abandoning the game, unless it is known that the referee is held up by another game still in progress. U8 and below teams may begin play with a coach or parent volunteer serving as a referee.

Any game abandoned prior to the start of the second half should be reported to the home team Association within forty-eight (48) hours. The game will then be subject to reschedule according to Association and/or league rules.

Any game abandoned after the second half has begun shall be considered a complete game.

The Referee has the final authority to postpone, suspend, or abandon a game due to inclement or threatening weather, team arrival times, or other circumstances he/she judges to be unsatisfactory. The referee's decision is not subject to protest.

### **3.5.6 Game Forfeits**

Only the Association or the League may declare a forfeit. Cause for declaring a forfeit may include failure to field a team with the minimum number of players, as defined by the League, within fifteen (15) minutes of a scheduled game time according to the referee's watch, fielding an ineligible player or a player under suspension, a suspended coach appearing at a game to coach the game, failure to allow all team members to participate in each scheduled game as required by the fifty percent (50%) participation rule, or failure of a coach, assistant coach, member, spectator or player to leave the field after being asked to do so by the referee. Failure to field a team due to official scheduling errors will not be cause for forfeiture.

Intentionally forfeiting a game without just cause shall result in the team, its coach, and its players being subject to disciplinary action.

### **3.5.7 Game Protests**

There shall be no protests in the U4-U8 age groups. U9 and above game protests should be reported according to the playing league rules and in accordance with the league's time limits. Any protests deferred to GNWSA by the playing league shall be handled as prescribed in the league playing rules. No protest may be made based on judgment calls by the referee. There are only two acceptable causes for protesting a game after it has been played: a team knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible or suspended player, or there has been an obvious error made in the application of the Laws of the Game that directly affects the outcome of the match and the referee admits it.



### **3.5.8 Coaching at Games**

All coaches of U6 and above age groups must remain no closer than 3 feet from the halfway line and within ten (10) yards of the halfway line and opposite their parent/spectator area, unless field proximity does not allow (i.e. Justin Park fields 1, 2 and 3, etc.) Only coaches of the U4 and U5 age groups are allowed on the field of play during the game. The referee shall have final say in determining if a coach is interfering and shall have the authority to ask the coach to stand outside the touchline for the remainder of the game if necessary.

Only one head coach and two team officials or a total of 3 approved team officials, per team will be allowed at game time. The Team Manager may be allowed on the team sideline during the game in lieu of one of the coaches. Coaching from behind or near the goal (within the penalty or 18-yard box) or goal area is not allowed in any age group. Coaches should not be coaching from the parent/spectator side for any reason.

All head and assistant coaches must have a valid Association ID card at game time in order to coach. Any coach that does not have their ID card at game time will be required to remain on the parent/ spectator side of the field, will not be allowed to coach, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

A head coach or assistant coach with a valid Association ID card must be present with and responsible for the team and spectators during every game. If not, the team may be required to forfeit the game.

All coaches shall be responsible for ensuring that the parents/spectators remain on the opposite side of the field from their players on their own half of the field. All coaches will be held responsible for the conduct, including foul or abusive language and acts, of their players and spectators as well as their own conduct which serves as a role model for their players. Offenders may be cautioned or ejected from the field of play by the referee or a League Official including but not limited to, Board Members, Field Marshals etc.

Any questions regarding a referee's call should be addressed to the referee in a polite and constructive manner at half-time or after the game.

Coaches requesting substitutions may, upon referee discretion, allow both teams to enter a substitute if the team in possession of the ball requests a substitution first.

### **3.5.9 Spectators**

When field layouts allow, all spectators and parents must remain on the opposite side of the field of play from the players and across the field from their players on their own half of the field. The referee has the final say on allowing or disallowing spectators and parents on the player's side of the field.

When field layouts allow, all spectators of all games must remain on their own half of the field, across from their players, within the top of the penalty box towards the halfway line, no closer than five (5) yards of the halfway line and five (5) feet back of the touchline. Parents and spectators must refrain from coaching the team in any way.

Horns, whistles, or other devices which can be used to generate loud noises of any kind are prohibited at game fields.

### **3.5.10 Referee Payments**

GNWSA shall pay referees according to the pay schedule approved by the Board of Directors. The Board shall follow guidelines of other Associations in their playing league when approving the pay schedule to keep payments as closely aligned as possible with other Associations in the league. The method of referee payment shall be determined by the Board.

### **3.5.11 Game Reports and Score Reporting**

Coaches of U9 and above are responsible for submitting game reports and player ID cards if required to the referee prior to the start of the game and submitting the final score as designated by the playing league. Any scores not submitted within the time allowed by the league scoring system will not count towards that team's points.

League rules will govern the use of game reports, player ID cards, and score reporting. League rules may prohibit games from being played if one or both teams do not have game reports or ID cards at game time.

### **3.5.12 Standings**

Standings for U9 and above age groups will be determined by League rules and are generally calculated using the total number of points awarded to a team under the 9-point system or as determined by the playing league.

All rescheduled games will be considered official games and count towards standings provided they are played by the "drop-dead" date of the season (or the absolute deadline) to be determined by the League.

Tie games are allowed during the regular scheduled season. Tie games during any playoff shall be concluded with a winner in accordance with NTSSA playoff rules.

Standings shall not be determined for teams in the U8 and below age groups.

### **3.5.13 Awards**

GNWSA shall furnish awards to the players on U9 and older teams that complete the season in first, second, or third place in their division.

Players on every U4 to U8 team will receive a participation award, with all players receiving the same award.

The Board has the final authority in choosing the type of award to be given each season.

### **3.5.14 Tournaments**

GNWSA youth recreational teams may participate in tournaments without reimbursement. Any team wishing to participate in a tournament that may conflict with regularly scheduled league games must submit a rescheduling request to their Commissioner or the GNWSA Scheduler prior to entering the tournament. Any league games that conflict with the tournament will be rescheduled if possible. However, reschedules cannot be guaranteed, and any game unable to be rescheduled and missed by the team because of participation in the tournament may result in forfeits by that team.

The coach is responsible for meeting the entry deadline for the tournament. GNWSA is not responsible for any missed deadlines or any canceled tournaments. In the event of a cancellation, the coach is responsible for contacting the tournament chairperson to inquire about a refund.

Coaches of teams competing in tournaments that allow guest players are responsible for acquiring and submitting all necessary guest player paperwork and abiding by all NTSSA guest player rules.

GNWSA may elect to send representative teams to an annual tournament such as the NTSSA Tournament of Champions.

Teams will be chosen for the annual tournament based on their standings in league play. Teams must participate in A or B division in order to qualify. A team must have a sixty percent (60%) win/tie record for division A, or a seventy percent (70%) win/tie record for division B. Any ties in standings may be broken with a playoff game scheduled by the age group Commissioner or GNWSA Scheduler. In the event more than one team in an inclusive age group qualifies, preference will be given to the higher division team(s). In the case when two age groups are combined, the even age group team(s) will have first option to qualify. Participation in an annual tournament (i.e. the NTSSA Tournament of Champions) is optional and not required even if the team qualifies and is chosen by the GNWSA Board of Directors.

### **3.5.15 Camps and Clinics**

GNWSA shall reserve the right to contract with outside person(s) or organization(s) that conduct soccer camps or skills clinics or offer in-house camps or skills clinics. Such camps or clinics must be made available to all GNWSA youth recreational players, or to all players in specific age groups if the camp or clinic is designed for or limited to certain age players. The GNWSA Board shall have discretion in both scheduling of the camps or clinics and deciding which camps or clinics to host.

### **3.6 Youth Recreational Rules of the Game**

GNWSA Youth Recreational Rules of the Game (separate document) shall be the FIFA Laws of the Game as modified in the NTSSA Rules of Competition unless otherwise stated. The Under 6, Under 8, and Under 10 age divisions shall play under the additional Developmental Player Program Modified Rules for Under 6, Under 8, and Under 10 as recommended by NTSSA or as modified in accordance with League playing rules.

### **3.7 Youth Academy Teams**

#### **3.7.1 Academy Overview**

GNWSA may offer an Academy Program to provide recreational soccer players, age U7-U10 the opportunity to enhance their overall soccer experience through additional skills and developmental training. GNWSA Academy will focus on individual player development. Skills lessons will be offered one day per week, or as determined by the Academy Committee. Academy league games, if available, will be held in conjunction with other local academies, and will also be held one day per week. Academy players will have the opportunity to train with and compete with players outside their recreational team. All skills lessons and GNWSA Academy league games will be in addition to the player's recreational practices and games. In the event of a conflict, the player's recreational team will take priority. Players who join the Academy must be registered recreational players and are strongly encouraged but not required to also participate on a recreational team.

#### **3.7.2 Academy Operations**

GNWSA may conduct an Academy Program in house or by contract with other coaches or organizations as determined by the GNWSA Board of Directors. The specifics of any contracts with outside parties must be approved by the GNWSA Board of Directors and may be subject to revocation at any time. An Academy Program conducted through the GNWSA will be subject to and must abide by the GNWSA Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, as well as the NTSSA Bylaws and the Bylaws/Rules of any leagues with which GNWSA is affiliated.

The Academy shall operate with an Academy Committee as outlined in these Bylaws. Registration, team formation, and rules of the game shall be in accordance with the guidelines set by the GNWSA Board, the Academy Director, and the rules of the Academy playing league. Financial operations and funds of a GNWSA Academy program shall be separate from the GNWSA Recreational Youth program. All Academy player registrations, use of practice or game fields, or other activities will be coordinated with the Board in order to prevent conflict with Recreational Youth activities.

### **3.7.3 Academy Player Registration**

Players wishing to register for a Academy or Select Team must be registered with NTSSA. Academy or Select players may choose to register with any NTSSA member association. For players who select GNWSA, players will be required to pay a fee, the amount determined by GNWSA. The fee will only include the necessary fee to NTSSA and any other administration fees to the member association and will not include any league or club fees. Players must also submit a completed Academy registration form. Players will not be considered registered until all necessary paperwork and fees have been received by GNWSA.

### **3.7.4 Academy Teams and League Play**

The GNWSA Board and the GNWSA Academy Committee shall form teams for Academy League Play according to the guidelines set forth by NTSSA and the playing league in which the teams shall participate. As determined by NTSSA, Academy teams shall not be required to follow recreational team formation rules. However, the goal of the GNWSA Academy shall be to allow all participants the opportunity for league play.

### **3.7.5 Academy Rules of the Game**

Academy teams shall generally play using the youth recreational rules of the game but may adopt modified rules as determined by the Academy League in which they participate.

## **3.8 Competitive Teams**

While GNWSA wants to support those children, who wish to participate in competitive soccer and still be affiliated with GNWSA, our focus is and will remain youth recreational soccer. Competitive clubs or teams wishing to call GNWSA their home Association must apply for sponsorship to the GNWSA Board of Directors. Any application for sponsorship will need to be approved by a majority vote at a GNWSA Board meeting. Competitive clubs or teams may ask for permission to use the GNWSA name as part of their competitive organization, but they must have separate bylaws and a separate governing body from the GNWSA recreational Association. GNWSA sponsored competitive clubs or teams are encouraged to have liaison representation at GNWSA Board meetings. However, the governing body and its members of such clubs or teams will not gain membership in GNWSA and will not have voting rights.

GNWSA reserves the right to revoke the sponsorship of a competitive club or team at its discretion. Through due process, GNWSA may revoke the sponsorship following the end of the agreed upon term, unless the reason for revocation involves violations of the rules of GNWSA or NTSSA by the competitive club or team, at which time revocation may be immediate.

### **3.9 Adult Teams**

GNWSA may choose to register adult players and teams for league play at Board discretion. Any person who is not currently registered as a professional player shall be eligible to register and play in GNWSA. Adult players who register through GNWSA and pay the fees required will gain membership in the Association and have voting rights. Registration, team formation, and rules of the game shall be in accordance with the guidelines set by the GNWSA Board, the Adult Commissioner, and the rules of the Adult playing league. Financial operations and funds of a GNWSA Adult program shall be separate from the GNWSA Recreational Youth program. All Adult player registrations, use of practice or game fields, or other activities will be coordinated with the Board in order to prevent conflict with Youth activities. If there are not enough Adult players to form teams to play in league competition, Adults may register with the Association of their choice. While competing outside of this Association, teams shall use a team name other than the Association name to identify themselves.

### **3.10 Ethics and Conduct**

#### **3.10.1 General**

All Members of GNWSA including but not limited to Board Members, Coaches, Referees, Other Volunteers, Parents and Spectators are required to abide by the NTSSA Code of Ethics/Conduct and the GNWSA Bylaws and the GNWSA Zero Tolerance Policy (separate document). Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action which may result in additional consequences, such as individual removal from attending practices and/or games and which can lead to a player's removal from the team or GNWSA.

All Members of GNWSA including but not limited to Board Members, Coaches, Referees, other Volunteers, Parents and Spectators are required to abide by the following Code of Ethics:

1. Children have more need for example than for criticism. Attempt to relieve the pressure of the competition, not increase it.
2. Be kind to your child's coach and officials. The coach is a volunteer, giving of personal time and money for a recreational activity for your child.
3. The opponents are necessary friends; without them your child could not participate.
4. Applaud good plays by your team and by members of the opposing team.
5. Do not openly question an official's judgement and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity and sportsmanship.
6. Accept the rules of each game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory, and to turn defeat into victory by working towards improvement.
7. Remember your child is involved in organized sports for their enjoyment, NOT YOURS!
8. Encourage your child to always play by the rules.
9. Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
10. Remember that your child learns by example. Children mimic what their parents say. Criticism of the coach, officials, teammates, and/or opponents fosters bad attitudes and can only lead to a negative experience for your child.

11. Parents should remember that a coach has an entire team of players to consider when making decisions regarding position, playing time, substitutions and strategy. The team does not revolve around one player.
12. A parent must never misrepresent to their team their child's eligibility to play on that team and must be honest in dealings with GNWSA and other Associations (including playing leagues).
13. A parent must never be verbally or physically violent or threatening with any coach, parent, player, or representative of GNWSA or other association.

### **3.10.2 Misconduct at Games**

GNWSA shall follow the guidelines in NTSSA Rule 3.11 regarding discipline and misconduct by players, coaches, assistant coaches, spectators, and referees, and shall use the Cumulative Card System as outlined in the NTSSA Rules. Coaches will be held responsible for any misconduct on the part of their team's spectators, parents, or players. This includes any foul and abusive language and any comments directed toward the referees, opposing players, opposing team's spectators and coaches. A coach or assistant coach may be cautioned or ejected from the field of play by the referee or a League Official including but not limited to, Board Members, Field Marshals etc. as a result of any misconduct of the spectators associated with his/her team.

### **3.10.3 Examples of Misconduct**

Misconduct shall include, but not be limited to, the following examples:

Foul and/or abusive language directed toward coaches, officials, players, or spectators

Arguing with officials, coaches or players

Throwing objects onto the field of play and/or at other persons

Destruction of equipment or facilities

Verbal and/or physical assault

Consumption of alcoholic beverages at or immediately prior to a GNWSA sanctioned event, or the use of illegal drugs at any time

Destructive Behavior, as determined by the Board, will be subject to review by the Board, and at the discretion of the Board, may be subject to disciplinary action, to include potential removal. For purposes of clarification, anything other than positive reinforcement and comments, at any time, whether verbal, written or via any channel, including social media, to any player, coach, referee or spectator within GNWSA or other NTSSA associations will be prohibited.

Other misconduct which is deemed disruptive to the orderly conduct of the game of soccer.

### **3.10.4 Reporting Misconduct**

Misconduct of members, coaches, officials, or players may be reported to the Board, with or without a request for action, according to the guidelines set forth in the Appeals and Discipline (A&D) section of these Rules.

A coach whose conduct is less than exemplary to his or her players, parents and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the Member Association or Playing League involved and the State A&D Committee.

## **3.11 Appeals and Discipline**

### **3.11.1 General**

The GNWSA Board shall have an Appeals & Discipline (A&D) Director and an Appeals & Discipline (A&D) Committee as set forth in these GNWSA Bylaws. The A&D Director and A&D Committee shall receive, hear, and rule on complaints as set out herein. All A&D proceedings and decisions shall conform to NTSSA guidelines.

### **3.11.2 Complaints**

Complaints may be filed against any member, player, coach, volunteer, or representative of GNWSA for a violation of the GNWSA Bylaws, Rules, and Regulations, or the rules of its affiliated organizations.

All complaints filed with GNWSA must be in writing and must include the name(s) of the individual(s) involved, a detailed description of the complaint and the circumstances involved and must be filed within seventy-two (72) hours following the incident that is cause for complaint.

A complaint may be filed with any member of the GNWSA Board. Any Board member receiving a complaint shall forward it to the A&D Director. Upon receipt of a complaint, the A&D Director shall begin a preliminary investigation of the charges and will determine, within seventy-two (72) hours, whether the complaint shall be rejected for cause, accepted without a need for immediate disciplinary action, or accepted for a hearing before the A&D Committee. In the event that the complaint is rejected for cause, or deemed to not require immediate disciplinary action, the A&D Director shall respond in writing to the complaint within five (5) days giving the reason(s) for rejection or lack of disciplinary action. The complainant may appeal a rejection to the Board, which may accept the appeal for hearing, or reject it.



### **3.11.3 A&D Committee**

Members of the A&D Committee will be chosen by the A&D Director from the Association membership with emphasis on impartiality and varying degrees of soccer experience. The A&D Committee shall be comprised of the A&D Director as Chairperson plus not more than six (6) members and not fewer than three (3) members of the Association.

Once the committee has been selected, a limited amount of information regarding the complaint will be released to the committee for the sole purpose of trying to determine any conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest does exist, the committee member will be released from the panel and a new member will be chosen. In the event a conflict of interest is discovered after the hearing has been convened, the member with the conflict of interest will automatically be disqualified from voting. The A&D Director shall not be a voting member in any matters before the committee, except in the case of a tie where a vote is required to break the tie.

### **3.11.4 Disciplinary Proceedings and Ruling**

The A&D Director shall have full discretion in deciding whether to grant a hearing on a complaint. In the event a hearing is deemed necessary, the A&D Director shall set a hearing date and location and notify all parties (the complainant, and the defendant(s)) by mail, with the parties having the right to be present at the hearing. The hearing shall follow the guidelines and recommendations as outlined in the NTSSA A&D Manual. Tape recorders, court reporters, or the presence of attorneys are strictly prohibited at GNWSA hearings. An attorney may only be present if he or she is a complainant, defendant, or witness who is directly involved in the hearing and he or she also happens to be an attorney.

The Committee shall vote after hearing the pertinent facts and asking any questions, and after the witnesses have retired and been dismissed. A majority vote of the voting members of the A&D Committee is required for approval of any proposed action. Unpublished votes or abstentions are not permitted.

The parties shall be notified as soon as possible, in writing, of the committee's decision. Action taken by the committee may include but not be limited to no action, written reprimand, probation, suspension, or revocation of membership.

### **3.11.5 Appealing an A&D Decision**

The GNWSA Board of Directors shall hear all appeals of decisions rendered by the A&D Committee. The complainant may appeal a decision to the Board, which may accept the appeal for hearing, or reject it. A \$100.00 deposit must accompany an appeal of a decision. The deposit will be returned only if the appeal is upheld. The next level of appeal is to NTSSA.

### **3.12 Amendments to the Rules and Regulations**

Amendments to the GNWSA Rules and Regulations must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the GNWSA Board of Directors at any regular meeting, provided a quorum has been reached. The President shall be allowed to vote on amendments. Only Board or Committee members may make a proposal for an amendment. The proposal must be made in writing and submitted to the Board at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the next scheduled meeting. The GNWSA Secretary shall provide written notification to the Board of any proposed Rule amendments at least fourteen (14) days prior to the next scheduled meeting. Amendments must be documented in the minutes of the meeting.