



# RULEBOOK

SEASON 2024-2025





# OSSL RULES

(Revised 11/1/24)

Ohio Soccer Association

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A program of:



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## **SECTION I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.01 Name of Program**

The name of the program shall be the "Ohio Soccer State League" (OSSL).

### **1.02 Mission**

This program will provide the highest standard of competitive play for youth teams in Ohio and assure the continued growth and development of elite level players. The program should also increase opportunities for the education of players, coaches, referees, and spectators.

### **1.03 Owner of Program**

The Ohio Soccer State League is owned and operated by the Ohio Soccer Association, Inc. Participation in the OSSL is governed by the rules adopted by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the United States Soccer Federation (US Soccer) and US Youth Soccer, except where modified below.

### **1.04 Management of Program**

OSSL shall be managed and supervised by the OSSL Commissioner under the programming of Ohio Soccer Association, Inc. (OSA).

### **1.05 Coaching Committee**

The OSSL Commissioner shall appoint a Coaching Committee composed of coaches from the OSA membership to advise the program on all soccer related matters.

### **1.06 Rules, Policies, and Procedures**

OSA, and specifically, the OSSL Commissioner, will have authority to promulgate all league rules, policies, and procedures reasonable and necessary for the administration and growth of the OSSL.

### **1.07 Matters Not Provided For**

OSA, and specifically, the OSSL Commissioner, shall have final authority in all matters not specifically provided for by the policies or rules.

### **1.08 Age Group Management**

Each age group will be managed and supervised by OSSL, which will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Creating age group divisions
- (b) Serving as the liaison with the State Referee Assignor(s) to ensure that match officials are assigned
- (c) Collecting approved OSSL team rosters
- (d) Recording and posting of scores and standings
- (e) Communication of age group news and information

### **1.09 Playing Seasons**

The OSSL shall operate one or two playing season(s). The OSSL shall determine the start and end dates of each season within the parameters of OSA Code of Regulations.

### **1.10 Precedence of Games**

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series, OSA State Cup, and USYS Regional Conferences competitions will have priority over OSSL matches.

### **1.11 Team Rights and Privileges**

Any team in the OSSL shall have the same rights and privileges afforded to any team playing in a league within their respective US Youth Soccer state association. Team participation in the OSSL will meet the requirements of the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.

### **1.12 Contact Information and Communication**

All member teams of the OSSL shall have contact information on file with the OSSL, including, but not limited to (a) the team manager's name, address, phone numbers and valid e-mail address and (b) the team coach's name, address, phone numbers and valid e-mail address. E-mail will be the primary means of communication within the OSSL. It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that accurate contact information is on file with the OSSL.

### **1.13 Returning Teams and OSSL Team Slots**

OSSL acknowledges that any team may apply for inclusion into the OSSL. Each team must comply with the OSSL application rules and policies. OSSL has the final authority in accepting teams for play into the OSSL. The OSSL may, at its sole discretion, deny any team's entry into the OSSL that does not meet the criteria set forth by the OSSL Rules. This criterion includes but is not limited to results in National League, USYS Regional Conferences, OSA State Cup, State League play and roster continuity etc.

Any OSSL team slot shall be allotted to the team/club/organization that owns/controls the name to the team that had participated in the OSSL during the previous season. In situations where the team coach and/or player(s) may depart such team or club and join or create another team, the OSSL slot and previous season's league/tournament results do not follow such group. Any questions regarding such ownership/control of the slot shall be directed by the OSSL to the Director of Coaching of the OSSL team/club on file with the OSSL. In situations where there is a mutual desire to merge or consolidate organizations/clubs/teams, the OSSL at its sole discretion may review and determine the outcome of any requests for the transfer of an OSSL slot if the organization/club/team that "owns" such slot formally requests the transfer of such slot to a partner organization/club/team. Such transfer must have the written support of both groups involved and the OSSL. The OSSL at its discretion may request additional written information in regard to this matter including but not limited to the rationale for the transfer, a guarantee on the number of returning OSSL players for the coming season, and any other matter that the OSSL deems pertinent in the review of this matter.

## **SECTION II. TEAM APPLICATION AND ADMISSION**

### **2.01 Team Eligibility**

Admission to OSSL will be based upon the OSSL Selection criteria outlined in 2.03 and 2.04

### **2.02 Good Standing**

All teams must be properly registered competitive teams that meet the requirements for participation and are in good standing with Ohio Soccer Association or their respective state association.

### **2.03 OSSL Selection Criteria**

To be accepted into OSSL, the following criteria will apply in this order:

1. For the U12 age group, teams that placed in the top eight (8) in OSA State Cup U11 9v9 division from the previous year will be automatically accepted into the OSSL Premier I Division.
2. A team that placed in the top four (4) in the OSSL Premier I Division and also placed in the top four (4) in OSA State Cup from the previous year will be automatically accepted into the OSSL Premier I Division.
3. At a minimum, the last-place team in Premier I Division may be relegated to Premier II Division and the first-place team in Premier II Division may be promoted to Premier I Division. The last-place team in Premier II Division may be relegated out of OSSL.
4. OSSL Commissioner shall select remaining available positions in each division based upon individual team history which may include participation in OSA/USYSA events.

### **2.04 OSA Approval**

All teams applying for membership in the OSSL must be approved by the OSSL Commissioner. Teams competing in OSSL must satisfy eligibility requirements for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series. Refer to Section 4.01 Formation of OSSL Age Groups Divisions.

## **2.05 Recommendations from OSA to USYS Regional Conferences (USYRC)**

A maximum of eight (8) teams per age group per gender may be recommended by OSA to the USYRC for each season of play. A total of four (4) teams per age group per gender are guaranteed acceptance into the USYRC for each season of play from OSA. Recommendations to USYRC from OSA will be based upon final standings in the OSSL. Teams playing in the US Youth Soccer National League, Elite 64, Premier I Division, and Club vs. Club Division of USYRC will be exempt from this clause. These teams will also receive priority recommendation to the USYRC from OSA. Teams relegated from the USYRC Premier I to USYRC Premier II will receive an automatic bid in the OSSL.

### **2.05.01 OSSL Endorsement Criteria**

Occasionally the USYRC may request additional teams. OSA may supply additional teams based upon the request of the USYRC Commissioner. All teams seeking endorsement and/or selection by OSA for participation in OSSL or USYRC must be in good standing.

## **2.06 Structure**

The OSSL will offer competition for boys and girls in eight age groups, beginning with U11 and concluding with U18/19. U11's and U12's will play a 9v9 format and U13's and above will play an 11v11 format. The U11, U12, U13, and U14 age groups will each consist of two (2) divisions per gender with a minimum of four (4) teams and a maximum of ten (10) teams. The top division will be the Premier I Division and the second division will be the Premier II Division. The remaining age groups will each consist of two (2) divisions per gender with a minimum of 4 teams and a maximum of 8 teams. The top division will be the Premier I Division and the second division will be the Premier II Division.

## **2.07 Application Deadlines**

All applications for participation in the OSSL must be received by the deadline as established by OSA for each playing season.

## **2.08 Application Process**

Team applications to participate in the OSSL must be completed via an on-line system established by the OSSL Commissioner. Teams will register directly with OSSL.

## **2.09 Acceptance of Teams**

Teams approved to participate in the OSSL are not automatically accepted into the OSSL. The OSSL will evaluate all applications and determine final acceptance into the OSSL based on the number of positions available and the configuration of teams in each age group. If a team declines participation in the OSSL after receiving final acceptance, that team will forfeit their application fee and may be placed in bad standing within OSA.

## **2.10 Acceptance of OSSL Rules**

Any team applying to play in the OSSL agrees to accept, abide by and comply with all rules, policies, and decisions by the OSSL and further agrees to pay all fees and fines that are due to the OSSL for participation in the OSSL.

## **2.11 Final Authority**

The OSSL shall have the final authority and right to refuse admittance of any team based upon the team's and/or club's prior performance in the OSSL. These factors include but are not limited to: failure to play OSSL matches as scheduled; failure to comply with OSSL rules; failure to pay OSSL referees; and/or failure to pay assessed OSSL fees or fines on time.

## **2.12 Fees and Other Expenses**

Each team playing in the OSSL will pay the fees established by the OSSL. The OSSL is not responsible for expenses incurred by teams through forfeits, travel, housing, coaching, uniforms, and other related team operating costs.



### **2.13 Return of OSSL Fees**

The OSSL shall return any fees paid to the OSSL for any team that is not admitted into the OSSL. In situations where a team withdraws following formal admission into the OSSL, the team will forfeit its OSSL team application fee and may be placed in bad standing within OSA.

## **SECTION III. TEAM ROSTERS**

### **3.01 Team Rosters**

Teams must file with the OSSL, in a process outlined on a seasonal basis by the OSSL, its OSA approved team roster. All teams must submit an initial official OSSL team roster of players no later than seven (7) days prior to the team's scheduled first game. All club pass players must be filed with the OSSL during business hours no later than 24 hours prior to a game's kickoff in order for all players to be approved on the team roster and eligible to play. An authorized official from OSA must verify the validity of all rostered players in order for players to be eligible for OSSL play.

### **3.02 Player Eligibility**

Player eligibility will adhere to the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series rules. All players must be age appropriate for the age group they are playing in. Younger players may play in older age divisions, but older players cannot play in younger age divisions.

During a season, a player may not be listed on the team roster for more than one OSSL team in the same age group and division. A player may transfer to another OSSL team in a different age group or in a different division within the same age group provided the transfer is in compliance with OSA State Cup Rules and US Youth Soccer National Championship Series rules.

A player who holds a current US Youth member pass may club pass "guest" on team(s) from within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club, as approved by OSSL. Club pass players may not be listed on the team roster for more than one OSSL team in the same age group and division. OSSL players can guest play in different age groups and between divisions within the same age group. OSSL players cannot guest play for teams within the same age group and division. Teams are restricted to a maximum of 3 OSSL Premier I Division players guest playing in the same age group's Premier II Division.

### **3.03 Maximum Roster Size**

The maximum number of players on a U11 or U12 team roster shall be 25 players. This includes first-time rostered players and club pass players. The roster must contain a minimum of 7 first-time rostered players. The maximum number of players on a U13 through U18/19 team roster shall be 30 players. This includes first-time rostered players and club pass players. The roster must contain a minimum of 7 first-time rostered players.

The maximum number of players playing per game on a U11 or U12 game day roster shall be 16 players and on an U13 through U18/19 game day roster shall be 18 players.

A player who holds a current US Youth Soccer member pass may club pass "guest" on team(s) per OSSL Rule 3.02 Player Eligibility. Teams may not replace club pass players once they are approved on the team roster unless the request is made prior to a team playing its first OSSL game, the player transfers to another club, or the player voluntarily quits their team.

### **3.04 Member Passes**

Valid US Youth Soccer member passes will be used for OSSL play. All US Youth Soccer member passes must be valid for the current season, have a current player photo, and be laminated.

### **3.05 Team Roster & Player Guide (Policy)**

The OSSL shall provide a policy for participating that may include additional guidelines regarding team rosters and player eligibility. The OSSL, at its discretion, may establish roster freeze dates during the playing season.

### **3.06 Player's Roster Limitation within an Age Group**

At no time may a player be on a Team Roster for more than one team within the same age group and division. Transfers between teams within the same age group and division of OSSL are not allowed.

## **SECTION IV. FORMATION OF DIVISIONS**

### **4.01 Formation of OSSL Age Groups Divisions**

The OSSL divisions in the U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, and U18/19 age groups are primarily based on but not limited to previous performance in the OSA State Cup and Ohio Soccer State League.

### **4.02 Age Group Division**

Teams will be selected each year on the criteria in 4.01 and 2.03. Teams may also be removed from the OSSL for disciplinary reasons.

### **4.03 Failure to Return to OSSL**

In situations whereby a team does not apply for participation for a season where such team had previously earned placement as an age group division team, such slot may be filled at the discretion of the OSSL Commissioner.

## **SECTION V. MATCHES-OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

### **5.01 Scoring Method**

The standings of teams within age group divisions are based upon the number of points earned. Teams earn points as follows:

- Three (3) points for a win
- One (1) point for a tie
- No (0) points for a loss

### **5.02 Forfeits**

In the event of a forfeit, the opponent will be awarded three (3) points and a 4-0 win. If a team forfeits more than one game, the OSSL Commissioner shall review the impact that such forfeits have on the standings and may consider dropping all results by all teams versus the team that has committed forfeits from the standings. This shall only be done if forfeits have a direct impact on the final placement of teams in league standings.

### **5.03 Forfeited Matches**

A team that forfeits a game may be subject to a fine per forfeited game. A team that forfeits a game that is outside their district may be fined \$250, plus field cost up to a max of \$150, and applicable referee fees. A team that forfeits a game inside their district may be fined \$125, plus field cost up to a max of \$150, and applicable referee fees. If a team forfeits more than one game, the fines may increase per incident.

Any game that is not played by the end of the season may be treated as a forfeit and each team involved may be fined up to \$500.00 per game. Any fine not paid by the end of the OSSL season will be the responsibility of that team's club. Failure to pay may result in denial of admittance for all teams associated with that club for the following OSSL season.

### **5.04 Uneven Number of Games**

In the event that the teams in an age group division do not play the same number of games due to unforeseen circumstances, not including games that teams refuse to play (i.e. forfeits), the final standings may be determined by using the percentage of points earned versus the maximum points the team could have earned. The OSSL will also determine any tie-breaking procedures that may need to be applied.

### **5.05 No Contest**

Games deemed to be no contest will be recorded as a game played with a score of 0-0 and each team earning zero points for the contest.

### **5.06 Reporting of Scores**

The winning team is responsible for submitting the game day rosters for both teams after a match. Once submitted, OSSL will record the score in the system.

### **5.07 OSSL Standings Tiebreaker**

If two teams are tied based on points earned, the team's final placement in the league standings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria:

- a) Winner of head-to-head competition (this criterion is not used if more than two teams are tied)
- b) Winner of most games
- c) Best Goal differential (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game
- d) Fewest goals allowed
- e) Coin Toss

Tiebreakers—Not Covered: For any situation not covered within these rules, the OSSL will also determine any tie-breaking procedures that may need to be applied.

### **5.08 Uniforms**

Teams playing in the OSSL are only permitted to wear the following on their game uniforms:

- a) The required OSSL badge as provided by the OSSL
- b) US Youth Soccer logo
- c) OSA logo
- d) Their individual club and/or team logo and team sponsor logo
- e) Manufacturer of uniform logo
- f) Name and number of player
- g) Any and all other logos must be approved by the OSSL Commissioner

### **5.09 Number of Games**

The scheduled number of games shall be determined by the OSSL based on the number of teams in an age group division.

### **5.10 Scheduling of OSSL Games**

- a) All games are self-scheduled by the teams involved.
- b) All teams must schedule their respective games upon receipt of the OSSL age group division information.
- c) Game dates and times must be mutually agreed upon by both coaches.
- d) OSSL will provide home and away team status. The home team is responsible for any expenses incurred for field usage.
- e) Teams may not schedule to play any more than two (2) OSSL games on any one day unless approved by the OSSL Commissioner.
- f) If both coaches cannot agree on game date(s), time(s), and location(s) for their game(s), the OSSL Commissioner may schedule the game(s). The game(s) must be played as scheduled by the OSSL Commissioner and each team will be responsible for half of the field cost.
- g) Game logistics (date, time, field, etc.) are due in to OSSL no later than the dates set forth by the OSSL Commissioner and can only be rescheduled per Rule 5.10i. The home team is responsible for updating the game logistics in the OSA online schedule, contacting the appropriate OSSL Referee Assignor (if the game is less than seven days away), and securing the field at their cost. Should the home team not schedule the referees in an appropriate manner; the home team may be subject to game forfeiture and the forfeit fine.
- h) Failure to report game logistics by the deadline may include sanctions, including but not limited to, forfeiture of home field advantage, game forfeiture, and/or fines.
- i) Games can be rescheduled due to inclement weather per Rule 5.12 (see OSA Policy on Weather) and for instances approved by OSSL, see below. Games may also be rescheduled in cases where two teams, playing each other in a tournament, have a previously scheduled OSSL game against each other. Teams

must follow Rule 5.10l or 5.10m in these cases and submit the Tournament Form to OSSL for preapproval before the game can be rescheduled. In instances where games are rescheduled due to weather or tournament play as noted above, the home team AND organization canceling the fields must notify the Referee Assignor and OSSL. The home team is responsible for submitting new game logistics to OSSL and rescheduled games must take place by the end of the season.

If a game is postponed without the opponent's approval, the game will be treated as a forfeit against the team requesting the change.

In instances where **both teams agree** to change a game date finalized in the OSA system, the following must occur:

1. The team requesting the change must contact the OSSL office for reschedule approval. Requests made 14 days or less from the originally scheduled game date may have a \$50 reschedule fee paid by credit card.
  2. The team requesting the change shall provide the new date, time, and location of the rescheduled game. OSSL will then update the online schedule. Teams are not allowed to update the new game information in the online schedule.
  3. For a game postponed within \*three days of the scheduled date, the team requesting the reschedule must pay referee fees. Fees are only paid to referees assigned to the game at the time of the request. \*For example, a game scheduled on the 4<sup>th</sup> would have to be rescheduled no later than the 1st of the month to avoid paying referees.
  4. If the rescheduled game date is less than seven days away, the team requesting the change must notify the OSSL Referee Assignor of the rescheduled game logistics. The team requesting the change will be responsible for paying referees that are not canceled properly. Per the Referee Scheduling Policy, if the rescheduled game date is three to six days from the time of request, the team requesting the change may have to pay any applicable referee scheduling fees by credit card to OSSL.
    - a. Six days prior to game: \$25
    - b. Five days prior to game: \$50
    - c. Four days prior to game: \$75
    - d. Three days prior to game: \$100
- j) If the home team and organization canceling the fields does not notify the OSSL Referee Assignor in time to cancel the assigned referees, the referee fees shall be paid by the home team. The fees must be paid before the rescheduled game will be permitted to be played.
- k) USYRC (GLC) games may be counted as OSSL games upon the agreement of both coaches or administrators and with the following conditions:
  - a. USYRC referees are used for the game.
  - b. Teams fill out both USYRC and OSSL paperwork.
  - c. Club pass players are approved by both OSSL and USYRC and are limited to OSSL Rule 3.03 Maximum Roster Size.
  - d. USYRC substitution rules will be enforced.
  - e. The head referee signs the OSSL game day rosters.
  - f. The home team submits the OSSL game day rosters to OSSL.
- l) OSA State Cup games may be counted as OSSL games upon the agreement of both coaches or administrators and with the following conditions:
  - e. Teams submit to OSSL for **preapproval** the OSSL Form to Count an USYSA Sanctioned Tournament Game as an OSSL Game. The Tournament Coordinator and Referee Coordinator signatures will be taken care of by OSSL.
  - f. OSA State Cup substitution rules will be enforced.
  - g. The head referee signs the preapproved tournament form and game day rosters after the game.
  - h. The home team submits the signed tournament form and game day rosters to the OSSL.
  - i. The score at the end of regulation time of an OSA State Cup game will be used for OSSL reporting.

- m) OSSL games may be scheduled during other US Youth Soccer sanctioned tournaments/showcases upon the agreement of both coaches or administrators no later than seven days prior to the scheduled game and with the following conditions:
  - a. Games must be played under OSSL rules.
  - b. Teams submit to OSSL for **preapproval** the OSSL Form to Count an USYSA Sanctioned Tournament Game as an OSSL Game form with all information/signatures filled out except the Head Referee Signature.
  - c. The head referee signs the preapproved tournament form and game day rosters after the game.
  - d. The home team submits the signed tournament form and game day rosters to the OSSL.

Teams and host organizations will be held responsible for OSSL rules compliance in these situations. If the above rules are determined to have not been followed, OSSL game forfeiture and fines may be enforced.

### 5.11 Match Schedule and Rest Periods

All matches will be played as scheduled, unless weather conditions dictate. It is the intent of the league to play only one match per day; however, when circumstances dictate, no more than two matches a day will be scheduled and no more than three matches per Saturday/Sunday weekend.

### 5.12 Inclement Weather

The home club is responsible for notifying the OSSL Referee Assignor, OSSL, and opponent as soon as possible if the scheduled fields are unavailable due to inclement weather (See OSA Policy on Lightning and Hazardous Weather). In terms of cold weather, if teams feel the safety of the players will be compromised; teams may cancel the game without penalty. Teams will need to contact OSSL and the OSSL Referee Assignor to cancel the referees. All reasonable efforts must be made to complete the match on the scheduled date.

## SECTION VI. RULES OF PLAY

### 6.01 Laws of the Game

Games will be played under the applicable rules of US Youth Soccer. Teams are responsible for obtaining and being familiar with the U.S. Soccer Official Administrative Handbook and the FIFA Laws as they govern play subject to the modifications noted herein. The OSSL Rules are subject to change by the OSSL Commissioner with or without notice.

### 6.02 Substitutions

Unlimited subbing is allowed for all age groups within OSSL.

### 6.03 Match Length and Ball Size

Match length and ball size for games in the OSSL shall be as follows:

Age Group	Length of Half	Ball Size
U17 and U18/19	45 min.	5
U15 and U16	40 min.	5
U13 and U14	35 min.	5
U11 and U12	30 min.	4

### 6.04 Field Size

Varying sizes may be used but must meet FIFA requirements for a full size 11v11 field and must meet US Soccer Player Development Initiatives for a full size 9v9 field.

### 6.05 Official Match

A match shall be considered official after one full half of play is completed (the second half does not have to start). If less than one half is completed and the match is abandoned, the entire match must be replayed, subject to OSSL Rule 8.04 and/or review by the OSSL. If a match is abandoned in the second half of play due to inclement weather, the final score will be the score at the time the match is abandoned. If a match is abandoned for any other reason

including but not limited to gross misconduct, the OSSL will decide the disposition of the match score following review of all information available including but not limited to referee game reports, reports for OSSL staff, etc.

#### **6.06 Forfeits-Lack of Appearance**

A 30-minute delay of the start of a game due to a team's lack of appearance is permitted for scheduled matches before the game is abandoned unless otherwise agreed to by both teams and the game officials. Failure to appear for a scheduled match will result in a forfeit.

#### **6.07 Anchored Goals**

The coaches and match referee should inspect the integrity of the goals to ensure they are secured and suitable for play. Matches shall not begin until both goals have been firmly secured.

#### **6.08 Player Passes/Rosters/Game Day Rosters**

Each team must bring their US Youth Soccer member passes for any participating player whose name and color picture is not listed on the OSSL game day roster, and a copy of their official OSSL team roster to every match. Game day rosters are to be given to the match referee prior to the start of a match. The game day roster and/or official OSSL team roster are to be provided to the opposing team upon request. No more than 16 players (U11 or U12) or 18 players (U13 through U18/19) from a team may appear on the game day roster as eligible to play in any single game.

Referees are to collect the player passes for any non-participating player that is sitting on a team's bench for the match prior to the match to ensure that such players do not participate in the match. Such player passes are to be returned to the team following the match.

#### **6.09 Playing of Ineligible Player**

A team that plays an ineligible player shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include: forfeiture of the match, any fines associated with a forfeit, suspension of the team's coach from OSSL competition or expulsion of the team from the OSSL.

#### **6.10 Member Passes Presented to Referee**

All US Youth Soccer Member Passes are to be given to the referee prior to the game for any participating player whose name and color picture is not listed on the game day roster. Referees are to collect the player passes for any non-participating player that is sitting on a team's bench for the match prior to the match to ensure that such players do not participate in the match. Passes will be returned to each team at the end of the game.

#### **6.11 Availability of Team Rosters**

Upon request, copies of official OSSL team rosters must be provided to the opposing team coach/manager prior to the start of each game.

#### **6.12 Uniform Color Conflict**

The home team, listed first on the OSSL schedule, is to wear light/white color jerseys and socks and the away team, listed second on the OSSL schedule, is to wear dark color jerseys and socks. The Referee shall define what constitutes light and dark color jerseys and socks.

#### **6.13 Coaching from Sidelines**

Limited coaching from inside the team's respective technical area is permitted. Coaches may not leave their team's technical area or enter the field of play without permission from the referee. When a technical area is not marked at the field of play, the match officials may determine the boundaries of the technical area.

#### **6.14 Team Bench Supervision**

A coach must supervise an OSSL team at all times at the team bench area. Coaches are required to provide the referee with a pass or have their name and color picture listed on the game day roster, as provided by OSA, certifying that the coach is currently rostered with the team/club. If by send off or emergency, a team does not have a coach to supervise the OSSL team during an OSSL game, then the game shall be forfeited. A maximum of 4 coaches, either coaches registered to the team that is participating in the game or coaches using a D.O.C. pass, may be on the team's/coach's sideline during a game.

### **6.15 Team Coaches – Licensing Requirement**

At least one coach on a team's OSSL roster must hold at the minimum a US Soccer Provisional "D" Coaching License or NSCAA National Diploma as the minimum coaching qualification. The coach meeting this requirement must be rostered on the team at the time of OSSL registration/carding.

Each OSSL carded coach must receive OSA risk management qualification, Safe Sport certification, and concussion education certification through NFHS or CDC.

### **6.16 Code of Conduct**

Abuse of any kind being verbal or physical will not be tolerated before, during, or following any games. Coaches, parents, and players are not to talk to referees or players in a negative manner at any point of an OSSL game. Reported incidents of coaches, parents, or players engaging a referee or player before, during, or after a game in an inappropriate manner including and not limited to shouting, using foul and or threatening language, and using physical force will be reviewed by OSSL. After reviewing the incident, OSSL may impose fines, the suspension of the coach from future OSSL games, the suspension of the parent's child or a player from future OSSL games, and/or suspension of the team from OSSL competition.

## **SECTION VII. MATCH CONTROL**

### **7.01 Three Person System**

Matches should be officiated by the three-person FIFA/USSF Referee System. In the event the assigned officials fail to appear (within 10 minutes of the match time); an attempt, through the OSSL Referee Assignor, should be made to secure certified officials. The referee may appoint certified USSF replacements for assistant referees who fail to show up by the match time. In the event certified USSF officials are not available, the referee may appoint club assistant referees. Club assistant referees shall be limited to decisions only on touchlines and possession as specified by FIFA/USSF Referee Guidelines.

### **7.02 Game Officials**

Game officials will be assigned under the authority of the OSSL working with the OSA SRA, SYRA or OSSL Referee Assignor(s).

### **7.03 Payment of Referees**

Referees and Assistant Referees appointed under the provisions of these OSSL Rules shall be paid at the beginning of the match. Each team is responsible for payment of one half of the OSSL required fees of the match officials. Referee fees will be determined by prevailing referee fees in the State and/or Region II.

If fields are closed and/or games are cancelled and the referees are not notified prior to their arrival at the site, the officials will be paid for their first scheduled match only. If there is only one assistant referee, only one assistant referee payment is made. The other assistant referee fee may be paid to a club assistant referee if they are a registered USSF official.

### **7.04 Termination of Matches**

Referees may terminate matches for lack of crowd control, poor team behavior, or other unsportsmanlike circumstances. Each coach is responsible for the behavior and conduct of his/her players, parents, and supporters. Upon request by the game officials, coaches are responsible to assist in the control of parents, fans, and spectators. The referee will report the termination of any match to the OSSL within 24 hours. The OSSL shall ascertain the facts and determine appropriate disciplinary action that may include:

- a) Reprimand,
- b) Forfeiture of game as appropriate.
- c) Suspension from future OSSL matches or
- d) Recommendation to the OSA CTO of a more severe penalty. If play is stopped at any time due to one of the teams (by action of players, coaches, administrators, spectators) adjudged to be at fault, it shall be at the

discretion of the OSSL Commissioner whether the game is to be replayed or declared a forfeit.

### **7.05 Filing of Referee Match Report**

If the match referee does not provide the winning team with the OSSL game day rosters immediately following the match, the referee must file the game day rosters with OSSL within 24 hours of the match. If a player is removed from a match for a red card, the referee must file with OSSL a red card report within 12 hours of the match. If a player is removed from a match for a suspected concussion, the referee must note the incident on the game day roster. Filing shall be defined as providing pertinent match information via e-mail or fax.

## **SECTION VIII. SEND OFFS AND DISCIPLINE**

### **8.01 Send Offs**

Any player or coach given a red card will be suspended for the team's next OSSL match. Suspensions should carry over to the following OSSL season. If a player or coach is ejected two times in a season, the individual will be suspended for the next three (3) OSSL matches.

For red cards, not including violent conduct situations, received at an OSSL game also counting for GLC and/or OSA State Cup, the player or coach will serve the red card suspension at the next GLC or OSA State Cup game. This will satisfy the OSSL suspension rule. For any other combined games, the player or coach is to serve the red card, not including violent conduct situations, in the next OSSL game.

Any player or coach who is deemed guilty of violent conduct on or off the field of play will be suspended for the next two (2) games in which the player or coach is scheduled to participate, whether it is an OSA State Cup game, tournament game or league game, pending further review by the OSSL.

### **8.02 Disciplinary Actions**

All disciplinary measures imposed by the OSSL, excluding violent conduct red cards, shall be limited to an individual or team's participation in the OSSL. The OSSL will record the issuance of all red and yellow cards and other matters involving the conduct of a team, its players, coaches, or supporters and immediately distribute this information to OSA. Furthermore, OSA has the right to impose additional sanctions regarding any matters arising from participation in the OSSL.

### **8.03 Violation of Rules**

Any violation of the rules herein will be subject to disciplinary action by the OSSL.

### **8.04 Disciplinary/Fine Schedule**

Prior to the start of the playing season, the OSSL may distribute a Disciplinary/Fine Schedule.

## **SECTION IX. PROTESTS**

### **9.01 Definition of a Protest**

A protest is a formal written objection of any violation of established rules, policies, or procedures related to a specific match. Only those teams directly involved in a match (i.e. the two competing teams) are permitted to protest a game result. Third parties, i.e., coaches from other teams, state administrators, cannot file protests on a specific game.

### **9.02 Filing Procedures**

A protest must be filed in writing and must include:

- a) The nature and specifics of the complaint
- b) A listing of the rules, policies, or procedures that have been violated
- c) A statement of the desired resolution
- d) Copies of all documents relevant to the protest



- e) The filing fee for a protest is \$250.00 (certified check or money order – made payable to Ohio Soccer Association)

All protests must be filed with the OSSL. The original document of the protest, along with all supporting documents, must be sent by Certified U. S. Mail – Return Receipt Requested.

### **9.03 Return of Filing Fee**

The filing fee is non-refundable.

### **9.04 Notification of Parties**

The OSSL shall notify all parties involved, no later than three (3) business days from receipt of a protest, that a protest has been filed.

### **9.05 Protests of Games Played**

Notice of intent to protest activity that occurred during a match must be registered with the OSSL Commissioner within 24 hours of completion of the match. All protests must be submitted in writing with the appropriate fee to the OSSL Commissioner. The protest must be postmarked no later than three (3) business days from match completion in accordance with the filing procedures listed in Section 9.02. The referee is the final authority on the field of play. All decisions of the referees with the respect to matters of fact, including judgment matters are final. The OSSL Commissioner is authorized to settle disputes which arise in the course of an OSSL match. The OSSL Commissioner, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will hear the protest, investigate, and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by teams, coaches, players or others involved related to such match and may impose appropriate sanctions for any violation found. A decision on a protest must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of a protest. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted).

### **9.06 US Youth Soccer Article XVII, Section 4**

In accordance with OSSL Rule 1.03, Article XVII, Section 4 states that: “No member of USYSA, official, league, club team, player, coach, administrative, or referee may invoke the aid of the courts of the United States or of a state without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate soccer organizations, as provided within USYSA.” Additionally, for violation of USYSA Article XVII, the offending party shall be subject to suspension and/or fines, and shall be liable to the OSSL and USYSA for all expenses incurred by the OSSL or USYSA and its officers and members of the Board of Directors in defending each court action, including the following: (a) court costs; (b) attorney’s fees; (c) reasonable compensation for time spent by the OSSL, OSA and/or USYSA officials and employees in responding to and defending against allegations in the action, including responses to discovery and court appearances; (d) travel expenses; and (e) expenses for holding special meetings by the OSSL, OSA and/or USYSA necessitated by court action.