

REGIONAL GUIDELINES, Region 2N62
(Effective August 4, 2004)

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ARTICLE ONE

PURPOSE

The purpose of these Guidelines is to regulate the affairs of the Region. These Guidelines have been adopted pursuant to Section 1.04 of the National Bylaws of the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) and are subject to such Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation of AYSO, the AYSO National and Section One Rules and Regulations, the Area 2N62 Guidelines and the Policies adopted from time to time by the AYSO National Board of Directors (collectively, the "National Regulations") and are hereby incorporated by reference. To the extent that these Guidelines conflict with or are in contradiction to any of them, they shall prevail over these Guidelines.

ARTICLE TWO

MISSION

To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on the AYSO philosophies:

Everyone Plays - Our goal is for kids to play soccer- so we mandate no child plays an entire game unless all other players on the team have each played at least three quarters.

Balanced Teams - At the start of each primary season we form teams as evenly balanced as possible---because it is more fun where teams of equal ability play.

Positive Coaching - Winning kids are built up, not torn down! We train and encourage our coaches to make the extra effort to understand and offer positive help to our players, rather than negative criticism.

Open Registration - Our program is open to all children between 4 ½ and 18 years of age who want to register and play soccer in our program. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing. However, enrollment may be limited by the number of qualified volunteers or fields.

Good Sportsmanship - We desire to create a positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

ARTICLE THREE

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGION

The duties and responsibilities of the Region, to the extent permitted by available resources, shall be:

(a) To operate a quality youth soccer program to youth from 4 ½ through 18 years of age in a safe, fun, fair, positive environment that complies in letter and spirit with the policies, rules, regulations and philosophies of AYSO;

(b) To maintain good community relations and become involved in youth development and other community activities;

(c) To register with the National Support & Training Center all participating players, coaches, referees, administrators and other volunteers prior to the commencement of the season;

(d) To assign players and coaches to assure proper balance of teams within each age division within the region or within a reasonable part thereof;

(e) To obtain and maintain safe playing facilities;

(f) To obtain and be accountable for uniforms, balls, goals and other equipment and to use such equipment in a safe manner;

(g) To schedule practices and games;

(h) To recruit and assign volunteer coaches and referees, and train them through clinics and other programs;

(i) To disseminate information to the participants, their families and the community concerning the Region and its programs;

(j) To recognize volunteer efforts;

- (k) To hold periodic meetings of the regional board and disseminate to the participants, their families and the community appropriate information concerning the operation of the region by the board;
- (l) To publish for the region and the files of AYSO, and make available to the participants and their families at least annually, financial statements of the region and guidelines for the operation of the Region approved by the area director and section director, or in the absence of such guidelines operate the region in accordance with the Standard Regional Guidelines as are in effect;
- (m) To collect and disburse fees and other monies for the sound financial organization and operation of the Region, to keep and submit to the National Support and Training Center, as required, accurate financial records to insure continuation of the tax exempt status of AYSO, to participate in the National Accounting Program and to pay the National Support and Training Center prior to the start of the season the National portion of its registration fees and all amounts due with respect to its purchases;
- (n) To elect or appoint, at a minimum, a regional commissioner, treasurer, risk manager/safety director, coach administrator, referee administrator and child volunteer protection advocate;
- (o) To comply with the Soccer Accident Insurance (SAI) Plan and to submit insurance claims according to current procedures;
- (p) To notify the National Support and Training Center immediately of any threatened or actual claim or lawsuit against the Region;
- (q) To implement AYSO National programs available to the Region, including coaches and referee training, at least once a year;
- (r) To cooperate with neighboring regions, area, section and development personnel, to promote growth, development and cooperation throughout AYSO;
- (s) To participate in area, section and national events and programs; and
- (t) To cooperate in policies and procedures developed by the board or the National Support and Training Center with respect to requiring each coach, referee and other designated volunteers to complete a volunteer form, and with respect to verifying the information obtained, before permitting the coach, referee or such volunteer to participate.

ARTICLE FOUR

MEMBERSHIP IN THE REGION

There shall be three kinds of members in the Region:

Participating Members: those persons serving the Region in a coaching, refereeing or administrative capacity, including the members ("Board Members") of the Regional Board. All coaches, referees and other volunteer positions designated by the AYSO National Support and Training Center shall be registered using the appropriate method prescribed by AYSO.

Playing Members: all registered soccer players ("players").

Contributing Members: those other persons to whom the Regional Board grants membership to recognize a contribution of value to the Region or to express its gratitude.

The names, addresses and telephone number of all members of the Region, as well as the information contained in the AYSO Executive Member Directory, are private and confidential. Such information and mailing lists may not be disclosed or distributed to anyone, including any vendor or sponsor, without the prior written approval of the National Executive Director.

ARTICLE FIVE

MANAGEMENT OF THE REGION

1. The Regional Commissioner (RC), with the support and assistance of the Regional Board, shall conduct the business and affairs of the Region.
2. Unless otherwise specifically provided by these Guidelines, all decisions of the Regional Board shall be made by a majority decision of the board members voting on any such matter; provided, however, that the RC may veto any such decision if the effect of such decision would be to violate any of the National operating regulations. Such veto may be reviewed by the Area Director (the "AD") on request by a 1/3 vote of the board members voting on such matter. By a 2/3 vote of the entire regional board, any other issue may be put to the participating members of the region, subject to fair and reasonable voting procedures to be adopted by the regional board.
3. The regional board shall fix, at its initial meeting each year ("annual meeting"), the time, date and place of each regular meeting of the regional board and send notice of such annual meeting to all participants in the program (this notification may be accomplished by posting this information on the Regional website at least 14 days before the meeting). In addition, the RC, the regional secretary or 1/3 of the board members may call a special meeting of the regional board on three days' prior notice stating the purposes of such meeting, which notice may be given in writing, by telephone or in person. A majority of the board members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of holding either a regular or special meeting. It shall be the policy of the region to hold at least one board meeting in each month during the soccer season and at least one every two months. The regional board shall provide for the taking of minutes of the proceedings at each meeting and make them available to the members of the Region. All regional board meetings shall be open to all participating members of the region unless the regional board determines that it is necessary to hold an executive session. An "executive session" is permitted only to review personnel matters, disciplinary matters, or legal matters, and should not be used where a vote upon any issue involving the affairs of the Region is taken.
4. At the annual meeting, the board members shall be appointed by the RC on the recommendation of the nominating commission and with the approval of a majority of the outgoing regional board (if any), to hold office for twelve months or until their successors shall have been duly appointed. At least one month prior to the annual meeting, the RC shall appoint a nominating commission consisting of board members and a reasonable number of persons who are not members of the board, but not less than three in number. Such nominating commission shall recruit and recommend board members for the next twelve months and accept other names of persons to be considered by the regional board for such positions. The nominating commission shall also publicize to the participating members of the region the regional board positions to be voted upon. Regional board members need not be parents of players in the region. The RC may choose not to appoint an individual to a board position, even though recommended and approved, if the RC deems there is sufficient reason not to make the appointment. In such case, the RC shall ask the nominating commission to recommend additional candidates for approval and appointment. This inclusive and democratic process should be followed any time there are board positions to be filled.
5. The regional board shall constitute a nominating commission at least three months, and preferably six months, before the expiration of the RC's term, or whenever there is a vacancy in the RC position due to death, resignation or removal. Such nominating commission may be the same nominating commission appointed pursuant to the preceding paragraph. The nominating commission shall submit its recommendations of one or more candidates for the position of RC to the regional board. The regional board shall, by a majority vote, nominate a RC and forward such nomination the Region's Area Director as directed by National Bylaw Section 7.03. In the absence of a regional board, or in the absence of a nomination by a majority of the regional board, the RC will be nominated by the Region's Area Director. A nominee for RC is subject to approval of the Area Director, Section Director and National Board of Directors and is effective only upon approval of the National Board of Directors. The National Board of Directors has full discretion to approve or disapprove a nominee for a term of three years or for a shorter period as it sees fit.
6. In the event of a vacancy in the position of RC other than at the expiration of the regular term, the regional board, including (if available) the outgoing RC, shall recommend an interim RC and submit such recommendation to the Area Director. The interim successor shall remain in office until the completion of the election procedures (in Paragraph 5).
7. The RC may serve multiple terms so long as he or she is nominated and appointed as indicated above.
8. It is the general policy of the Region that the regional commissioner will have normally served at least one year on the regional board before serving as RC.
9. It is the general policy of the Region that the RC not serve as a coach or assistant coach, nor hold any other board or staff position in the Region, except with the approval of the regional board. Where the regional commissioner or other board member also serves in another volunteer capacity, the regional board shall, at a minimum, adopt special procedures to insure that decisions affecting the RC acting in such other capacity are made by other, disinterested board members. The RC shall act in all other ways to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

10. No board member or any other participant in the region shall receive monetary or other compensation for his/her services to the region, nor may he/she use his/her position to benefit him/her directly or indirectly in any other way, such as a supplier of equipment or camp programs to the region. Nothing in this paragraph prohibits any regional board or staff member, or regional volunteer, from being reimbursed for his or her out-of-pocket expenses incurred for work on behalf of the region with the approval of the regional board. All executive board members must have completed AYSO Form 5.3, "Conflict of Interest Policy Statement Acknowledgement Form," and these forms must be maintained by a member of the Regional Board as directed by the RC.
11. Any vacancy on the regional board, except that of RC, may be filled by a majority vote of the then remaining board members, though less than a quorum, and the person filling such vacancy shall serve until the next annual meeting and until his/her successor has been duly appointed.
12. Any member (except the RC) may be removed in accordance with Article Nine, paragraph 4, of these guidelines. The RC may be suspended by the Area Director or the Section Director and removed only by the National Board of Directors in accordance with Sections 3.07 and 7.03 of the National Bylaws.

ARTICLE SIX

OFFICERS

The Regional Board shall, at a minimum, consist of the Regional Commissioner, Regional Treasurer, Regional Risk Management/Safety Director, and the Regional Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate. The Regional Board may create, designate, appoint or elect such other voting board, or non-voting staff, positions including one or more Assistant Regional Commissioners, a Regional Secretary, a Regional Coach Trainer, a Regional Director of Referee Instruction, a Regional Director of Referee Assessment, Age Division Directors, a Director of Playing Fields, a Regional Registrar, a Team Parent Coordinator, a Director of Public Relations, a St

level.

Regional Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate

The AYSO volunteer position of Regional Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate is intended to oversee the child and volunteer protection program in the Region in accordance with the AYSO Safe Haven program.

ARTICLE SEVEN

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

1. Team Assignments

Team assignments shall be made by those persons delegated such task by the Regional Board. Retention of players on any team shall be limited to the head coach's child(ren). Otherwise, there shall be no automatic retention of players on any specific team or with any specific coach from the previous season. Every attempt shall be made to balance the skill level of teams within each division. Once teams are formed, no transfer of any player from one team to another may be made without the approval of the coaches of both teams involved, the Age Division Director, the RC and the parent or guardian of the player. In the case of inter-regional play, no transfer of any player from one team to another, after such teams are formed, may be made without the additional approval of the Area Director and, if affecting section play, the Section Director.

2. Registration Fees; Refunds

The registration fee for each player participant shall be fixed annually by the Regional Board. The fee for this season is set forth in Appendix D to these guidelines. The Regional Board may by specific grant or scholarship, or by Regional policy, waive such registration in whole or in part with respect to any participant if such fee would create a hardship for such participant or his/her family. Any player who withdraws from the program shall be entitled to a refund of such registration fee. The cost of the uniform or other specific non-recoverable costs will be deducted from the refund.

3. Eligibility

All boys and girls, between the ages of 4 ½ and 18, based on their age as of July 31 of the year in which the season begins, shall be eligible to register for the program, subject to field availability, volunteers support, AYSO operating regulations, and such rules as may be issued by the Regional Board. It is the duty of the Region to assure that only eligible players are permitted to register and play.

4. Length of Season and Cancellation of Games

The season shall be of such duration as determined by the Regional Board and as set forth in the Regional calendar attached to these guidelines. Inclement weather or poor field conditions may necessitate from time to time the postponing or canceling of games. Any such postponement or cancellation will be made at the discretion of the RC or the Regional Risk Management/Safety Director as early as practical before game time. Once the game begins, only the referee in charge of the particular soccer field may suspend or cancel the game, except that the RC or designate may suspend or cancel games due to inclement weather or other conditions that may warrant such action.

5. Attendance; Participation

All Divisions: no child will be permitted to play an entire game unless all other children on the same team have played at least three-quarters. Moreover, a goal keeper may only play a maximum of ½ in goal on every U14 and younger team. Parents must be aware, however, that late arrival for a game is disruptive to the team and must be avoided. Therefore, a player arriving less than fifteen minutes before the scheduled game time may result in the player participating in less than three quarters while other players play an entire game.

6. Protests

No protest of games shall be permitted. However, coaches are encouraged to file with the Regional Referee Administrator a written report within 48 hours after a game of any perceived misapplication by a game referee of the Laws of the Game or rules and regulations. This procedure shall not be used as a means of complaining about, or criticizing, any judgment call of a referee or assistant referee. If, after investigation by the Regional Referee Administrator, it is found that a law, rule or regulation was misapplied, such referee shall be so informed in order to ensure that no further misapplication occurs.

7. Conduct During Games

The highest standards of conduct and good sportsmanship must be maintained at all times by players, coaches, referees,

spectators and all other participants. Offensive, insulting, or abusive language is forbidden. The use of alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal drugs in the vicinity of the playing field during practices or games is strictly forbidden.

All participants must wear the official uniforms provided for all games and dress in a neat, clean manner. The use of shin guards is required at all practices and games.

Coaches are expected to be positive and set the best possible example for the participants. Excessive coaching from the sidelines shall not be permitted, and the function of the coach should be to provide encouragement and a positive direction. The coach may enter the field of play only with the consent of the referee and may coach only within ten yards in each direction from the halfway line of the field (in no event in either of the penalty areas or from behind the goals).

Spectators at games must remain behind the spectator control line (three yards from the sideline) and between the penalty areas, and their vocal efforts should be limited to positive compliments to the participants. Spectators are expected at all times to act positively around players and to demonstrate respect for opponents, officials, and all other volunteers. *Under no circumstances should they attempt to coach or address remarks derogatory to players or the referee.*

At the end of the game, the players on each team shall line up and shake hands with the players of the opposing team and thank the referee and assistant referees.

Discipline shall be up to the referee at each game. The referee shall have the power and authority to caution and send off players and coaches (as well as spectators, in the case of outside interference) from the playing area if their conduct violates the Laws of the Game, these guidelines or otherwise interferes with the course of play. No appeal of disciplinary action taken by a referee shall be allowed.

A player or coach who is sent off or cautioned may be subject to additional disciplinary action (e.g., parent conferences, game suspensions, expulsions) at the discretion of the Regional Board upon thorough review of the incident following the procedures outlined in Article 9 (Dispute Resolution). A coach, assistant coach or spectator who is sent off or cautioned may also be subject to similar or additional disciplinary action at the discretion of the Regional Board upon thorough review of the incident following the procedures outlined in Article 9 (Dispute Resolution). There is an automatic additional one game suspension for any participant who is sent off the field by a referee for a disciplinary reason.

8. Refreshments at Games

It shall be the responsibility of each team to supply its own refreshments. It is suggested that the best kind of refreshment is cool water. It is the responsibility of the coach and team parent participants to assure the absence of any drug, stimulant or other harmful substances in any refreshment given to the player.

9. Parental Participation

As AYSO is an "all-volunteer" organization, each parent or guardian who has a player in the Region shall be strongly encouraged to volunteer his or her valuable time and services in some way. The Region shall not reduce or eliminate the player fee based upon voluntary work done by a participant's parents or guardians and shall not charge an additional fee to those parents of players who do not volunteer their services or who do not donate funds to the program. No fee distinction shall be made based upon parental or player participation in regional fundraising activities. The Region may not condition the registration of a player based upon any requirement of volunteer participation by a parent or guardian, except as follows.

In a situation of a division without an adequate number of coaches or referees, the Region may not be able to form enough teams and facilitate games to accommodate all players. In such event, registration priority will be given in the following order: children of active volunteer coaches, assistant coaches, referees and active board members, followed by all others on a first-come, first-served basis. Team sizes are limited to comply with short-sided games for younger divisions and the game playtime rule for each player. To become a volunteer coach, assistant coach or referee, the volunteer must complete required training, including safe-haven training. This training is offered free of charge.

10. Facilities

It shall be the responsibility of the Director of Playing Fields or his designee to set up and take down the goalposts and nets. It shall be the responsibility of the Director of Playing Fields, his designee or the referees to set up corner flags before the first game of each day and take them down following the last game each day. Each field shall be lined under the direction of the RC and/or the Director of Playing Fields, and each group of fields shall be provided with a first aid kit. No trash shall be left at the facility except in designated containers. Parking shall be limited to those areas designated at the fields.

11. Sponsors

The Region encourages local businesses and individuals to support its program. Suitable recognition shall be given to them. Contributions are strongly encouraged to be made to the region rather than to a particular team. All such contributions are considered charitable contributions and are deductible for U.S. tax purposes, subject to the applicable limitations in the Internal Revenue Code. It is the responsibility of any sponsor to comply with the Internal Revenue Code

and AYSO will give no opinion on whether a particular donation is or is not deductible.

12. Equipment

The Region shall make arrangements to supply each player with a shirt with the original AYSO logo properly affixed thereto and, if possible, a pair of socks and shorts. Each player is expected to provide his/her own appropriate footwear and shin guards. No player may participate in a game without such shirt, socks, shorts, appropriate footwear and shin guards. Players may not wear jewelry of any kind (including chains, watches, body jewelry and earrings), bandanas or other ornamentation or anything else that may, in the opinion of the referee, create an increased risk of injury to himself or herself or to other players during the game.

Medical information bracelets and other medically required devices, such as blood sugar monitors should not be removed, but must be padded and taped to the player's skin.

Prescription eyeglasses may be worn, but must remain firmly on the wearer's head or restrained by a strap. Non-prescription eyeglasses and sunglasses are not permitted to be worn by a player during a game.

Hard casts (including padded casts), splints, helmets and hard padding are not permitted to be worn by a player during any game or practice. Players with permanent orthodontic braces are strongly encouraged to wear mouth guards.

ARTICLE EIGHT

FINANCIAL, BANKING AND RELATED MATTERS

1. Budget; Financial Statement

The Regional Board shall adopt an annual budget which provides the basis for setting player registration fees. At the end of each season, the Regional Board shall cause to be prepared a statement of income received and amounts expended in connection with the program. Such statement shall be made available for review by the parent or guardian of each player and a copy shall be made available upon reasonable request.

2. Account Signatories

All checks drawn on any bank account maintained by the Region shall bear two signatures, one of which must either be the Regional Treasurer's or the RC's. Additional signatories must be authorized by Regional Board action. Two signatories from the same household shall not be allowed. There must be at least three signatories on all Regional bank accounts.

3. Transfer of Funds

All funds received by the Region, whether from fees, gifts or otherwise, must be deposited into the Region's checking account(s), from which all expenses and disbursements must be paid. All funds transferred in or out of the Region's savings account must be transferred from or to the Region's checking account(s). No regional expenses or reimbursements are to be paid from monies collected which have not first been deposited into, and accounted for within, the regional checking account(s).

4. Cash Handling Procedures

The Regional Treasurer, in cooperation with other Regional Board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to cash receipts and cash disbursements. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

Funds withdrawn for "cash box change" must be deposited back into the regional bank account on the same day, or the first banking day thereafter.

All registration fees collected in cash and checks must be reconciled to the bank deposit slip and the AYSO registration forms.

Arrangements should be made to have the cash received deposited in the regional bank account on the same day such cash is received, or the first banking day thereafter.

When handling a significant amount of cash monies, at least two regional volunteers should be present.

5. Receipt Procedures

The Regional treasurer, in cooperation with other Regional Board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to receipts for monies received. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

A cash receipt book must be used to record all payments received on behalf of the Region in cash. The original cash receipt for each transaction must be given to the payer, and the copy kept in the cash receipt book. All cash receipts must be signed or initialed by the volunteer completing the cash receipt form.

The cash receipt book must be reconciled to the bank deposit slip.

A volunteer accepting payment for registration fees should not upon an available portion of the player registration form: (a) the amount of the payment received; (b) whether such payment was made in cash or by check; (c) the check number (if paid by check); (d) the date such payment was received if different from the date of the parent or guardian's signature on the player registration form; (e) the names of any other family member players for whom the payment was received; and (f) the initials of the volunteer receiving such payment.

6. Immediate Accounting to the Regional Treasurer

The Regional Treasurer, in cooperation with other Regional Board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to the immediate accounting to the Regional Treasurer for monies received, checks written upon the regional bank account, invoices received for accounts payable by the Region, and requests for reimbursements to regional volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Region. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

No one should sign a regional check in blank or which contains any item to be filled in later.

No one should sign a regional check without verifying the expense by examining the invoice or request for reimbursement.

No requests for reimbursement to regional volunteers shall be honored without a written request signed by such volunteer, itemizing the out-of-pocket expenses incurred, and with supporting receipts or other documentation attached.

All bills and invoices received for payment by the region must be forwarded to the Regional Treasurer for payment, if not already paid, within five (5) days of the receipt.

The Regional Treasurer must be notified of any checks written on the regional bank account without his or her knowledge within 48 hours of the issuance or delivery of such check for payment of any regional expense.

All bank withdrawal transactions and regional checks shall be noted with the appropriate National Accounting Program (NAP) a code denoting the purpose for such transaction.

7. Immediate Deposit Procedures

The Regional Treasurer, in cooperation with other Regional Board and staff members shall establish internal control procedures to safeguard against the misuse or loss of regional assets, especially in regard to the immediate deposit of monies received. Such internal control procedures shall include the following:

All fees collected on behalf of the Region for registration, sponsorships, fundraising and donations for any other purposes shall be deposited immediately after being reconciled with the appropriate cash receipt book, registration form, and/or bank deposit slips.

Under no circumstances may any person accept on behalf of the region any post-dated check or agree to hold any check for deposit on a later day.

8. Monthly Bank Reconciliations

All Region accounts shall be reconciled by the Regional Treasurer, and verified by another board member who is not authorized to sign on the accounts. The reconciled statement(s) and copy of bank statement must be presented to each board member at their regularly scheduled meeting.

9. Credit/Debit Card Transactions

If credit/debit cards are accepted, all required accounting shall be performed and submitted on the first banking day after each credit/debit card transaction.

10. Audits

The Region shall maintain it's own Regional Auditor and in addition, at all times shall cooperate with, and respond to, inquiries by the Area Auditor and Section Auditor.

ARTICLE NINE

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

1. General Policy

It is the policy of this Region to resolve all disputes involving persons involved in the Region in an amicable way, if possible. Compromise should be emphasized whenever possible, and personality conflicts should be avoided. If disciplinary action is found to be necessary, to take only the minimum action necessary. All means available should be taken to avoid legal action.

It is the policy of the Region to avoid punishing the players for the conduct of the parents except when there is no other solution (e.g., where a parent cannot or will not cease his or her disruptive behavior).

It is the policy of the Region to avoid wiping out years of good memories of AYSO and good service to AYSO, and that suspension or removal procedures are to be used only as a last resort. Voluntary resignation is preferable to a suspension or removal procedure.

It is the policy of the Region to avoid publicizing the suspension or removal proceedings beyond those persons who need to know, and to respect the privacy of the individuals involved. However, the RC or Regional Board should notify the Area Director, the Section Director, the National Support & Training Center or members of the AYSO Legal Commission of the pending proceedings pursuant to the operating regulations, and must comply with all applicable regulations and laws requiring suspension for abuse and similar events.

2. General Due Process Procedures

Disputes involving day-to-day activities of the region should first be addressed and resolved, if possible, by the appropriate Board Member in charge of the activity and/or then by the entire Regional Board, if necessary. Disputes arising out of game conduct should first be addressed and resolved, if possible, by the Regional Referee Administrator and/or then by a disinterested review board appointed by the RC and/or then by the entire Regional Board, if necessary.

If it is determined that it is necessary that a person involved in the Region needs to be disciplined or his or her participation in the Region limited or terminated, then the RC or the Regional Board shall give notice in writing to such person of such intention. Such notice shall specify the action to be taken and the reasons therefore. Such notice shall further notify such person that he or she, upon request, will be given a reasonable opportunity to explain why such action should not be taken. Such opportunity to respond may be in person at a hearing, by telephone or in writing. The RC or Regional Board may appoint a disinterested hearing board or committee of neutral persons to consider such discipline. After such opportunity has been given, the RC, Regional Board, hearing board or committee shall make its determination and announce it in writing to all persons concerned.

3. Suspension

The RC or Regional Board may suspend a person involved in the Region from further involvement in the program on notice (by telephone, fax or writing or in person) if there is found to be an imminent danger to players or to the program by his or her continuing involvement, or if a crime has been alleged to be committed by such participant. Such a suspension must be followed by a disciplinary hearing described in Paragraph Two, above. A suspension is considered to be temporary in nature, and such suspension may be removed or set aside by a majority of the Regional Board at any time.

4. Removal

The RC or the Regional Board may remove a person (whether or not suspended) involved in the Region, from further involvement in the program. Such removal may only be made upon prior notice and after a determination is made that removal is appropriate, as the result of a disciplinary hearing described in Paragraph Two, above. Such removal is only permitted when there is found to be (a) a violation of the National Bylaws or of the rules, regulations, policies or philosophies of AYSO or (b) conduct which disrupts the Region's or AYSO's activities or programs.

5. Hearing Procedures

The disciplinary hearing shall be held at a neutral location. The hearing procedures shall be communicated to and understood by all parties prior to the commencement of such hearing. All interested parties are to be informed of the date, time, and location of such hearing.

A person who has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter shall not participate in any stage of the procedure. In the event the RC has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter, any authority herein to be exercised by the RC shall be referred to the Area Director. A person has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter if that person's conduct is in any way called into question by the events, or if that person is a witness to the events, has a familial relationship with any person involved in the matter, has a financial interest in the outcome, or whose judgment, for any reason, cannot be unbiased and neutral.

A committee or hearing board of disinterested persons shall conduct the hearing as quickly and as fairly as possible, but may structure the proceedings as circumstances may require to keep them as positive as possible as well. The proceedings should be kept as confidential as may be necessary to protect all parties. The committee or hearing board shall listen to the facts of the situation from all interested parties. Each "side" may be permitted or requested to make their presentations outside the presence of the other if necessary to prevent undue acrimony or harm to the participants. Parties do not have the right to involve attorneys or to cross-examine other parties or witnesses, although either may be permitted within the discretion of the committee or hearing board if it believes that such participation will be helpful and positive. It is strongly recommended that players and other minors not be permitted to participate as witnesses or to offer "testimonials" either in person or in writing unless it is unavoidable. The committee or hearing board may ask such questions and request such documents or other evidence as may be necessary to obtain all pertinent facts, but should refrain from being overbearing with such examinations and requests.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee or hearing board shall adjourn to a private session where the decision will be reached. Under no circumstances shall the committee or hearing board deliberate in the presence of the parties involved in the dispute. The committee or hearing board will then decide the issues raised pursuant to AYSO operating regulations and these regional guidelines based on the evidence submitted, and by a majority vote determine the appropriate action to be taken. Such action may include that no action should be taken against the individual accused, or that a warning or caution be given, that a written reprimand be given, that further education or probation be required, or that such person should be suspended or removed from involvement in regional activities. All interested parties shall promptly be notified of such decision after, in the case of removal or where otherwise deemed appropriate, such individual is given an opportunity to resign voluntarily.

6. Review

Any determination made in accordance with this Article shall be final and binding on all concerned unless it is determined by the Area Director, or, if he/she is not disinterested, the Section Director, that such determination was arbitrary and capricious, or that the procedure was not fair, or that the person or persons making such determination are found not to have been disinterested. Any interested party dissatisfied with the decision or action taken by the committee or hearing board may request a review of such decision by the Area Director, Section Director or National Board of Directors, as may be appropriate pursuant to the operating regulations relating to dispute resolution and due process. There shall only be one review of each matter.

ARTICLE TEN

CHANGES IN GUIDELINES

1. Approval of Guidelines

These Guidelines shall become effective after being approved by the RC and the existing Regional Board, the Area Director and the Section Director and then submitted to the National Support & Training Center.

2. Change in Guidelines

Once adopted, these Guidelines may only be amended by the Regional Board by a 2/3 vote of the Regional Board Members, with the approval of the RC, the Area Director and the Section Director, and then submitted to the National Support & Training Center.

APPENDIX ONE

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Administration

a. Region 62 is committed to the protection of all its children from all forms of abuse and neglect while participating in the program, and it promotes the awareness and prevention of child abuse in the community at large.

b. Region 62 shall have a *Regional Child Protection Advocate*, who shall be responsible for overseeing the child protection program in accordance with AYSO guidelines. He or she shall be a member of the regional board and will act as the main resource on child protection issues and shall be the region's liaison with the *Coordinator of Child Protection Advocacy* at the AYSO Education Department.

c. Region 62 requires all volunteers to complete, date and sign the appropriate volunteer application form and its authorization to AYSO to perform applicant screening. All volunteers shall be screened at a level appropriate to the level of risk.

d. Region 62 shall have the right to revoke the participation of any individual who lies or knowingly misrepresents information on the application form, or who violates the principles of these child protection policies. AYSO shall have the

right to revoke both the registration and certification of any volunteer who falsifies information, is found guilty of child abuse, or fails to fill in and return the volunteer application form.

e. The complaint, grievance, and appeal process shall be as described in the regional guidelines, with the addition of appeal to AYSO if it is the screening agency. The names and identities of the claimant and the defendant shall be protected at all times during the proceedings. The claimant need not be present to give evidence at any ensuing hearing, thus avoiding victimizing the child a second time.

f. A volunteer accused of abuse will be asked to resign voluntarily. If the volunteer refuses, the board will move to suspend the volunteer until the matter has been resolved. Regardless of civil or criminal guilt for the alleged child abuse, the continued presence of the volunteer in the program will damage the reputation of the region, even during the investigation and pretrial phase.

g. A volunteer accused of child abuse but subsequently cleared may apply for reinstatement in the region. However, reinstatement is not a right, and reinstated volunteers are not guaranteed to return to their former positions.

2. Training

a. All coaches, referees, other volunteers who work directly with children, and the child protection advocate should be trained before working with children. Head coaches must be certified; assistant coaches and referees should be certified.

b. Only official AYSO materials and courses (or those approved by AYSO) may be used to train and certify these key volunteers.

c. Properly signed rosters of attendees will be sent to AYSO Education to validate each attendee's training, and certification, and to insure that the coaches and referees are registered with AYSO.

d. Courses and clinics shall be taught by AYSO certified and registered teachers and instructors, or be under the supervision of AYSO trained instructors. Only official AYSO programs, procedures, and policies will be taught.

e. Other volunteers will be trained before they do their jobs, including child protection training as appropriate. Whenever possible, "on the job training" will be avoided.

f. Volunteers shall be subject to ongoing evaluation, and additional training may be required to maintain good standing within the region and the organization.

3. Supervision

a. The coach administrator and referee administrator shall cooperate with the child protection advocate to ensure the safety of the region's players.

b. The coach administrator and the child protection advocate annually should meet with the head coach of each team, either jointly or separately, to review child protection and supervision responsibilities.

c. The coach administrator shall observe and review the performance of coaches to see that it conforms to the standards set by this child protection policy.

d. The head coach of each team shall be responsible for assuring that at least two responsible adults (one of whom may be the coach) are with his or her team at all times (See #6 for supervision ratio). One of these adults must be of the same gender as the team. The head coach is also responsible for informing assistant coaches and team parent about child protection issues, supervision ratios, and reporting procedures.

e. Once the head coach has assumed charge of the children on his or her team, he or she remains responsible until a duly designated adult has taken charge of each child after practice or a game. No child shall be left unsupervised after a game or practice. Parents who are unreasonably late or consistently tardy should be reported to the child protection advocate for action. Each coach may establish a standing policy of where children may be picked up by late parents.

f. The supervision ratio shall be 1:8 or less; that is, one adult for every eight or fewer children, with the stipulation that there be two adults present at all times.

g. The referee administrator and the child protection advocate annually should meet with the referees, either jointly or separately, to review child protection and supervision responsibilities.

h. The referee administrator shall observe and review the performance of the referees to see that it conforms to the standards set by this child protection policy.

i. The game referee is responsible for providing a "child safe" atmosphere for the match, and has both the duty and authority to take any reasonable action to make it so. The referee is to report to the referee administrator and child protection advocate any cases of questionable conduct toward children by any coach, player, parent, sibling, or spectator before, during, or after the match.

j. For the protection of both the children and the volunteer, AYSO and Region 62 strongly recommend that no volunteer permit himself or herself to be alone with any child or group of children (except his or her own) during AYSO-sponsored activities.

k. Volunteers shall not have AYSO activities away from the practice or playing fields without prior notification to the RC, the child protection advocate, *and* the parents. Such notification shall be in writing, stating the nature of the activity, the names of the children involved, and the names of the adult supervisors.

4. Conduct

- a. Region 62 advocates and expects exemplary behavior by all its participants, and it will hold a **strict line** on conduct as laid out in these policies, regardless of whether misconduct is committed by coaches, referees, players, siblings, parents, or spectators.
- b. Demeaning verbalizations are not permitted, especially those abusive statements that deal with race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, age, or sex.
- c. In addition to verbal abuse, physical, emotional, sexual, and ethical abuses are prohibited, as is neglect of a child. Examples of potentially abusive behaviors include but are not limited to striking, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, shaking, biting, yelling, threatening, insulting, mocking, demeaning, indecent gesturing, wanton gesticulation, ogling, suggestive posturing, inappropriate touching, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, suggestions to cheat or to harm another, or unreasonable pressure to play when sick or injured.
- d. Some forms of touching are acceptable as long as they are respectful and appropriate:
 - *Touching should be in response to the need of the child, not the need of the adult.
 - *Touching should be with the child's permission.
 - *Resistance to touching must be respected.
 - *Touching should never include the breast, buttocks, or groin.
 - *Touching should be done in the open, not in private.
 - *Touching should have a brief, limited duration.
 - *Touching is age and developmentally dependent; what's appropriate changes over time

APPENDIX TWO

PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

1. National Guidelines

AYSO's National Guidelines regarding privacy policies and principles can be accessed via the National AYSO website: www.soccer.org.

2. Regional Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate (CVPA) Protocols

- a. The Regional Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate (CVPA), the Regional Registrar or an appropriate designee shall collect all completed volunteer application forms. All volunteers or staff members who have access to volunteer forms must have passed appropriate background checks.
- b. Upon collection, the completed volunteer application forms shall immediately be put into a large envelope and, if collected by an appropriate designee, promptly given to the CVPA and/or the Regional Registrar.
- c. Completed volunteer application forms shall never be left unattended and should always be kept under lock and key.
- d. Once the initial set of completed volunteer application forms have been collected and checked for completeness, the NSTC copies shall be mailed to the AYSO National Support & Training Center (NSTC). Thereafter, completed volunteer application forms can be mailed to the NSTC on a weekly basis as they come into the region. All forms shall be sent to the NSTC through certified mail or via fax to ensure delivery.
- e. As indicated in the AYSO Screening Protocols, the Regional CVPA may call the personal and professional references provided by the volunteer applicants and report to the CVPA office at the NSTC any irregularities discovered during that process.
- f. The Regional CVPA and Regional Registrar shall not discuss sensitive volunteer information among themselves or with others in the Region except as required to conduct Regional business.
- g. Regional copies of completed volunteer application forms shall be accessible only to the regional CVPA and/or the regional registrar.
- h. The NSTC shall notify the region if an applicant does not meet the suitability requirements to be an AYSO volunteer.
- i. Completed volunteer application forms are to be kept for a period of seven years, unless otherwise directed by the NSTC, after which the forms are shredded or incinerated.