

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION
ARBITRATION BOARD RULES

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ARTICLE I

Establishment

The Arbitration Board (A.B.) is established under the Constitution and Bylaws of the Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association (EPYSA).

ARTICLE II

A. Responsibility and Authority Arbitration of Claims

The A.B. shall arbitrate all claims and/or all infractions which arise from within the structure of the EPYSA and shall adjudicate disputes involving EPYSA affiliates. (judge all matters pertaining to player and/or club infractions). The A.B. may delegate its authority in some or all matters to the grievance committees of the various affiliated subordinate organizations of the EPYSA, exclusive of matters related to referee assault or to matters arising between or among the affiliated subordinate organizations.

B. Decisions

All decisions rendered by the various grievance committees of the affiliated subordinate authorities shall be within the framework of these rules. All decisions by these subordinate authorities shall be subject to review by the A.B. Such decisions may be revised by the A.B. if such action is deemed necessary.

C. Authority

The A.B. has the authority to penalize all leagues, associations and clubs affiliated with the EPYSA and the individual officers, coaches, members and players thereof. Penalties shall include but not be limited to letters of censure, forfeiture of points in competitive standings, fines, the restrictions of playing fields, and temporary or permanent suspension from the activities of EPYSA or its member organizations. The A.B. has the power to call for the production of any documents and evidence it may require.

D. U S Youth Soccer/USSF Rules

Nothing stated herein shall conflict with the rules or regulations of the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and U S Youth Soccer whose rules and regulations in these matters shall always take precedence.

ARTICLE III

Membership

A. Members

The A.B. shall consist of a Chairman and fourteen individual members (each from a different affiliated subordinate organization). All are appointed by the EPYSA President, subject to the approval by the Board of Directors. The A.B. Chairman shall vote only in case of a tie.

B. USYSA Competitions

An Arbitration Board for USYSA competitions (i.e. State Cups) exclusively conducted by this state association shall consist of the Cup Commissioners and the Chairman of the EPYSA Arbitration Board.

C. Secretary

The A.B. Chairman shall appoint a recording secretary from the membership of the A.B. to record the minutes of all A.B. meetings and to maintain permanent records of all A.B. activities. The Recording Secretary shall submit the minutes of the A.B. to the EPYSA office for retention.

ARTICLE IV

A. Meetings

The A.B. Chairman will convene the A.B. to hear appeals or at any other times when deemed necessary and may routinely review all league grievance committee reports.

1. Petition

Written petition to the A.B. Chairman from a majority of the A.B. membership, exclusive of the A.B. Chairman, shall be sufficient cause to convene the A.B.

2. Hearing Procedures

In all hearings conducted under the A.B., the parties shall be accorded:

- a. notice of specific charges or alleged violation in writing and possible consequences if the charges are found to be true;
- b. reasonable time between receipt of the notice of charges and the hearing within which to prepare a defense;
- c. the right to have the hearing conducted at a time and place so as to make it practicable for the person charged to attend;
- d. a hearing before a disinterested and impartial body of fact finders;
- e. the right to be assisted in the presentation of one's case at the hearing;
- f. the right to call witnesses and present oral and written evidence and argument;
- g. the right to confront witnesses, including the right to provide the identity of witnesses in advance of the hearing;
- h. the right to have a record made of the hearing if desired; at defendant's expense.
- i. a written decision, with reasons for the decision, based solely on the evidence of record, issued in a timely fashion.
- j. notice of any substantive and material action of the hearing panel in the course of the proceedings; and
- k. quality concerning communications, and no ex-parte communication is permitted between a party and any person involved in making its decisions or procedural determination except to provide explanations involving procedures to be followed.

B. Quorum

EPYSA shall require three members of the A.B. to be present for any hearing. While the A.B. is comprised of more than three members from EPYSA, it is not always possible for all members to participate in all hearings. Each member shall be from a different affiliated subordinate member. Therefore, because hearings must be held within prescribed or reasonable timeframes, a quorum of three A.B. members is practical.

C. Referee Association

A representative of the State Referee Committee may attend A.B. meetings in an observer capacity.

ARTICLE V

Procedure

All matters of concern to the A.B. or its subordinate authorities must originate from the referee's game report or from a formal protest/appeal submitted in writing by the offended party. Notwithstanding the fact that a referee's game report is postmarked after forty-eight (48) hours of the completion of the game, the A.B., in its sole discretion, may determine to utilize the procedure hereunder and hold a hearing thereon. The following procedures shall be followed:

A. Referee Game Reports

The referee's game report shall be submitted to the appropriate subordinate authority or to such person or persons as may be designated to receive such reports. Game reports shall be post-marked no later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of a game. Where cautions or ejections, injuries, spectator problems, game protests, or field irregularities are issued to players or team officials, the referee's report shall be submitted as follows: One (1) copy shall be mailed to the EPYSA office; one (1) copy shall be mailed, together with the offender's pass in the case of suspensions, to the games commissioner of the league or association to which the offending party belongs; one (1) copy shall be mailed to the secretary of the referee's association and one (1) copy shall be retained by the referee.

B. Formal Protests

1. Laws of the Game

All protests arising from an infringement of the Laws of the Game are subject to a protest fee. Copies of the protest shall be made in duplicate; One (1) copy shall be forwarded to the appropriate subordinate authority post-marked no later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the game in question accompanied by the protest fee. (Amount to be established by the respective subordinate authorities.) The second copy shall be retained by the protesting party.

2. Registration

Protest arising from improper player registration shall be submitted in writing in keeping with the guidelines stated in Article V. B.1 above. Player registration related protests are not subject to mailing deadlines or fees.

3. Damages

All claims for damages arising from a game-related event shall be submitted in writing in keeping with the guidelines stated in Article V. B.1 above, and shall be accompanied by a claims-fee (amount to be established by the respective subordinate authorities).

4. Appeals

A decision of a subordinate authority may be appealed to the A.B. by any affiliated club or individual within ten (10) calendar days following the publication of such decisions. The original notice of appeal, accompanied by an appeal fee of two hundred dollars (\$200), shall be sent to the EPYSA office. One (1) copy shall be forwarded by the appealing party to the subordinate authority whose decision is being appealed. One (1) copy shall be retained by the appellant.

Any adjudicating board shall have the authority to stay a suspension or decision pending the due process hearing; however, the stay is never automatic or required.

Cup appeals are also subject to the \$200 appeal fee and forwarded directly to EPYSA for adjudication by the Chairman of the A.B. and the Cup Commissioners.

C. **Summons to Meetings**

Summons to meetings of the A.B. shall be mailed by the EPYSA office upon direction from the Chairman of the A.B. no later than five (5) days prior to the day of the meeting.

The summons shall advise all interested parties of the nature, date, place, and time of the meeting.

Cup appeals must be forwarded to EPYSA not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the game.

Having been summoned, the failure of any club or individual to appear shall not deter the hearing of evidence and the rendering of a decision based upon such evidence.

Referees who disregard the summons shall be reported to their state referee committee with a recommendation for disciplinary action.

D. Conflicts of Interest, Eligibility to Vote

No affiliate shall be represented at any hearing by an officer of the EPYSA, a representative to the EPYSA, a member of the A.B., or a member of the grievance committee of the interested league. Further, any member of the A.B. or a subordinate authority who is a member of an involved club or who is a member of a club which stands to benefit directly or indirectly from the results of the hearing shall not participate in the hearing nor shall he, in this instance, have a vote. Any individual who participates and votes in a lower level grievance, protest or appeal hearing shall not be permitted to vote at a higher appeal level.

E. Faulty Filing Procedures

Protests, claims, or appeals not filed within the required time limit, or filed without sufficient supporting material, or filed without the proper protest, claims or appeal fee shall be rejected.

Telephone calls or written communications directed to a member or members of the A.B. to discuss or explain the details of a given case shall be cause for an adverse decision.

F. Publication of Decisions

The decisions of the A.B. or its subordinate authorities shall be promptly published via US mail. Verbal notification and email may supplement but shall not supplant this responsibility.

ARTICLE VI

Expulsion From Game and Suspensions

A. Player or Team Official

A player or team official who has been ordered from the field of play or from the sidelines by the referee shall automatically incur the penalty or penalties for the given offense or offenses as stipulated in Article VIII of these rules. The referee's game report shall automatically initiate the action against the ejected individual.

B. Player Under Suspension

A player, while under suspension, shall not be released by his club until completion of the team's playing season or the end of the seasonal year (whichever is shorter).

C. Team Official Under Suspension

A team official, while under suspension, shall not change his affiliation.

D. Serving Suspensions

All periods of suspension shall run continuously. Game suspensions in effect at the termination of one playing season or registration year shall remain in effect even into the following playing seasons or registration year until the full period of suspension has been satisfied.

E. Game Suspensions

Game Suspensions received as a result of misconduct, or as a result of infractions of EPYSA/USYSA rules and regulations in sanctioned league play, or as a result of infractions of league rules and regulations, must be served in the league in which the suspension was applied.

Game suspensions received as a result of misconduct in an EPYSA/USYSA Cup game, or as a result of infractions of EPYSA/USYSA rules and regulations governing cup competitions, must be served in EPYSA/USYSA Cup games. If the suspended person's team has concluded its participation in cup competition, the suspension must be served in the player's next cup competition.

A player or official who receives a suspension for a period shall be suspended from all soccer activity during the term of the suspension.

ARTICLE VII

Penalties

At a minimum all players will be subject to the below stated penalties in accordance with the age group they are registered with, rather than their chronological age.

A. Use of Ineligible Players

A team of an affiliate which, without EPYSA approval, fields a player ineligible because of improper or non-registration shall suffer forfeiture of games plus a fine (payable by the affiliate) of ten dollars (\$10) per ineligible player per game for the first offense and twenty dollars (\$20) per ineligible player per game for any subsequent offenses during a given registration year.

B. Double-Rostered

A primary player who, during a given registration year, registers to play for a team shall be suspended for four (4) games with the second team.

C. Suspension for Misconduct Toward Game Officials

Misconduct against game officials may occur before, during and after the match, including travel to and from the match. Misconduct may also occur at later times when directly related to the duties of a game official.

Referee Assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee. Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee's uniform or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.

Upon verification of an allegation of assault, the alleged offending person is immediately suspended from all participation in USSF-sponsored activities until a hearing is held on the assault and a decision issued by the A.B.

Minimum penalties for assaulting a referee were adopted by USSF and are mandatory. The effective date of suspension is from the date of the assault.

The player, coach, manager, or official committing referee assault is automatically suspended as follows:

1. For a minor or slight touching of the referee or the referee's uniform or personal property, at least three months from the time of the assault;
 2. Except as provided in clauses three or four, for any other assault, at least six months from the time of the assault;
 3. For an assault committed by an adult and the referee is 17 years of age or younger, at least three years; or
 4. For an Assault when serious injuries are inflicted, at least five years.
2. Abuse is suspension of at least three (3) scheduled matches within the rules of that competition.

Referee Abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment.

Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee using foul or abusive language toward a referee; spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property; spitting at (but not on) the referee; or verbally threatening a referee. (that implies or threatens physical harm).

D. Suspensions for Violent Conduct – (Players, Coach, Team Official)

1. Fighting (i.e. engaging in combat with an opponent, colleague or spectators by means of the mutual exchange of blows delivered by hand, head, foot or other portions of the body).

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	2 games	4 games
2nd offense:	4 games min.	8 games min.

2. Deliberately striking or attempting to strike or kick an opponent, colleague, or spectator:

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	2 games
2nd offense:	4 games min.	8 games min.

3. The throwing of objects (i.e., soccer balls, snow or ice balls, stones, rocks, dirt, mud, sand, etc.) at an opponent, colleague, or spectator:

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	2 games
2nd offense:	2 games min.	4 games min.

4. The spitting at or on an opponent, colleague, or spectator:

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	2 games
2nd offense:	2 games min.	4 games min.

5. The verbal threat of bodily harm or property.

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	2 games
2nd offense:	2 games min.	4 games min.

6. Gesturing or signaling obscenely at an opponent, colleague, or spectator:

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	2 games
2nd offense:	2 games min.	4 games min.

E. Suspensions for Serious Foul Play and Persistent Misconduct – (Player, Coach, Team Official)

1. Serious foul play shall be understood to be play characterized by fouls, as defined by Law XII of the Laws of the Game of an aggravated nature, committed with such fervor as to threaten an opponent with serious physical harm:

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	2 games min.	2 games min.
2nd offense:	4 games min.	4 games min.

2. Suspensions for Abusive Language directed at an opponent, colleague, or spectator.

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	2 games
2nd offense:	2 games min.	4 games min.

3. Persistent Misconduct (i.e. unsporting behavior, persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game, unauthorized entry onto the field of play, etc.):

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	1 game
2nd offense:	2 games min.	2 games min.

4. Dissent:

	<u>Under 14</u>	<u>Over 14</u>
1st offense:	1 game	1 game
2nd offense:	2 games min.	2 games min.

F. The Accumulation of Cautions

A player, coach, or team official who, in a given registration year, accumulates three (3) individual cautions shall be suspended for one (1) game. The second accumulation of three (3) individual cautions within the same registration year shall result in an additional suspension equivalent to two (2) games. Further misconduct on the part of the individual during the same registration year shall be sufficient cause for the A.B. or its respective subordinate authority to consider additional penalties of increased severity. In each case, action against the individual is automatically initiated by the referee's game report.

G. Conduct Detrimental to the Good and Welfare of Soccer

Any player, team, club or league official whose conduct is considered to be detrimental to the good and welfare of soccer shall be suspended for one (1) game for the first offense and for a minimum of two (2) games for the second offense or more within a two (2) year period. Such misconduct shall include but shall not be limited to misbehavior while a spectator; the consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or the use of any illegal substance in the vicinity of the playing field before, during, or after a soccer game.

H. Refusal to Play

A team or affiliate) which refuses to play a scheduled game or games as directed by higher authority shall forfeit said game or games and shall be held liable for the payment of all applicable referee fees and forfeit fees where applicable and shall be fined according to the current Fee and Fine Schedule.

I. State Cup Games

State Cup games are covered by their own rules.

J. Player Transfers

An individual who intentionally submits false information relevant to his past player record or past or present club affiliation in order to register as a player or to affect a player transfer shall be suspended for four (4) games.

A club or league representative who intentionally submits false or inaccurate information to affect a player registration or transfer shall be fined one hundred dollars (\$100) and placed on probation for one (1) year.

K. Approaching of Players

When a registered player is approached by another team, club, coach or any other person to leave his current club the penalty will be a suspension of the accused of at least six months on the first occasion and at least one year on the second occasion. (2006)

M. Misconduct and Tournament Rules Violations During Privately Sponsored Play

Incidents of misconduct and/or tournament rules violations occurring during the playing of any privately sponsored competition shall be penalized as the articles of these A.B. rules provide for such misconduct or rules infractions.

Where misconduct or rules violations have been displayed by a club official, coach or player under the jurisdiction of another state or national association privately sanctioned competition or tournament but during a tournament sanctioned by the EYPSA, a full account of the misconduct or rules infraction shall be forwarded by EPYSA in writing to the state or national association having jurisdiction over the offending party.

N. Payment of Fines and the Reporting of Forfeiture Bonds

Barring cause under appeal, fines not paid and forfeit bonds not reported within the time limits stipulated by the EPYSA or its subordinate associations shall cause the delinquent organization to be suspended. Organizations suspended shall be ineligible to participate in further competition until the proper financial obligation has been fulfilled.

The EPYSA time limit for the payment of fines or the reporting of forfeit bonds shall be thirty (30) days from the date a fine is imposed or a bond is declared forfeited.

O. EPYSA Arbitration rules have precedence over league rules where conflict exists.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Suspension: This means the withdrawal of rights and privileges such as, but not limited to: the right to play, coach, officiate or otherwise administer or participate (directly or indirectly) in the game of affiliated soccer. Any person or group (team, club, league, board, etc.) that has been suspended shall be in bad standing for the entire term of the suspension with rights and privileges withdrawn unless specifically stated otherwise by the suspending authority.

Second Offense: Except where stated otherwise, shall be understood to mean the recurrence of a stated offense for the second or more times during a registration year. This definition shall not apply to offense against a referee or assistant referee which shall remain a permanent part of a player's record during his entire playing career.

Eligibility to Play: This means a player is registered and not under suspension.