

DCSA CONSTITUTION

- 1.1 Name, Purpose, and Affiliation
 - 1.1.1 Name: This organization shall be the Desoto County Soccer Association, (DCSA), Incorporated.
 - 1.1.2 **Purpose:** The Association's purpose shall be the control, regulation, promotion, and development of and education for soccer in the County of Desoto at all playing levels of competition, i.e., Division III (Recreational), Division II (Intermediate), Division I (State Division), and Adult Divisions. In order to accomplish its purpose, the Association shall have jurisdiction over all affiliated members within its territory.
 - 1.1.3 **Affiliation:** This Association shall be associated with the Mississippi Youth Soccer Association (MYSA), United States Youth Soccer Association (U.S. Youth Soccer Association), Incorporated and the United States Soccer Federation (USSF); shall be an integral part of these Associations; and shall at all times recognize the authority, rules, and laws of these bodies.
- 2.1 **Territory and Headquarters**
 - 2.1.1 **Territory:** The territory shall be the County of Desoto.
 - 2.1.2 **Headquarters:** The legal headquarters, domicile, and residence shall be in the County; Judicial District, if any; and the city, if any, of the residence of the President. The Council may designate other business headquarters as appropriate.
- 2.3 **Administration and Rules Suspension**
 - 2.3.1 **Administration:** This Association shall be governed by its Constitution, By-laws, Rules, and Regulations as supplemented by the USSF and U.S. Youth Soccer Association Constitution and all their regulations. In the event of any conflict, the USSF and U.S. Youth Soccer Association documents and regulations shall apply.
 - 2.3.2 **Rules Suspension:** Any rule may be suspended at any Council meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members in order to deal with an emergency and to protect the purpose of the Association (Paragraph 2.1.2).
- 2.4 **Disaffiliation, Savings Clause, and Amendments**
 - 2.4.1 **Disaffiliation:** This Association shall not disband or withdraw from MYSA, U.S. Youth Soccer Association and USSF except on a two-thirds (2/3) vote of DCSA members-in-good standing present at any business meeting as defined in the DCSA By-Laws.
 - 2.4.2 **Savings Clause:** If any word, phrase, sentence, or other provision of this Constitution or its application to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect the other words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and provisions or applications of this Constitution, and to this end, the provisions of this Constitution are declared to be severable.
 - 2.4.3 **Amendments:** This Constitution shall only be amended at the AGM by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present acting on proposed amendments which are submitted to the AGM in accordance with the established DCSA Rules and Revisions Process.

DCSA BY-LAWS

- 3.1 **DCSA Council**
 - 3.1.1 **Members:** DCSA shall be administered and operated by a Council of elected officers as specified herein. The Council shall consist of an Executive Council, who are the nine (9) officers elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting; and the Immediate Past President as an ex-officio member. The Executive Council members are the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Third Vice-President, Secretary, Registrar, Treasurer, Head Coach and Head Referee.

3.1.2 **Voting Policies:** The Council practices will ensure that:

3.1.2.1 Each member may cast one vote in all properly presented and considered matters.

3.1.2.2 Each member may advocate, represent a member's views, and/or vote on a proposed resolution to any member grievance, which must be resolved by the Council. However, a member must abstain from acting on behalf of their team or club and voting on the resolution motion for any grievance involving their own team or club.

3.1.2.3 All matters are determined by a majority vote of the meeting quorum, except where designated differently in the constitution and these By-Laws.

3.1.2.4 The Executive Council members shall have no voting alternate at any DCSA meetings.

3.1.2.5 Members must be present to vote.

3.1.3 **Authority:** The Council shall have the authority to:

3.1.3.1 Transact all business of this Association.

3.1.3.2 Delegate its authority to such person or persons whom it may determine should accomplish one or more of its delegated responsibilities.

3.1.3.3 Enforce the Constitution, By-Laws, and Administrative rules of the USSF, U.S. Youth Soccer Association, MYSA and DCSA

3.1.3.4 Arrange games of any nature whatsoever in its own name, and to that end, it may request the memberships support and/or their affiliated organizations and personnel.

3.1.3.5 Create and manage the establishment of special funds such as injured players, trips, and/or any organization which it may deem expedient for the welfare of The Game. This authority may be delegated to others under the direction of the Council.

3.1.3.6 Suspend, expel, and/or impose such fines or penalties upon any organization and/or person under its jurisdiction who violates or breaches the Constitution, By-Laws, and Administrative Rules of USSF, U.S. Youth Soccer Association, MYSA and/or DCSA.

3.1.3.7 Settle all disputes between two or more DCSA Members.

3.1.3.8 Make the final decision on all controversial matters subject to the MYSA, U.S. Youth Soccer Association and USSF Appeals and Decisions Process.

3.1.3.9 May bestow the title of Honorary President upon any person who has performed meritorious service to DCSA. The Council may vest in that person such rights and privileges as it deems appropriate. This individual shall not have voting power.

3.2 **Officers**

3.2.1 **Term of Office:** The Officers of this Association shall hold office for two years, or until their successors have been elected and installed as per section 3.2.2 of these By-Laws. The President, 1st Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Registrar shall be elected at the odd years AGM to their two year terms, effective 1994. The 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, Head Coach and Head Referee shall be elected at the even years AGM to their two year terms, effective 1995. Any elected officer who must vacate their position temporarily during the seasonal year, may assume the positions duties from their duly appointed successor at the end of the temporary period. There shall be no term limits and officers are eligible to succeed themselves.

3.2.2 **Election of Officers:** The Executive Council shall be elected in the following manner. All elected individuals must be a member - in good standing and must receive a majority of the cast votes. The Head Coach and Head Referee must be licensed officials to be eligible for election.

- 3.2.2.1 The entire membership shall elect the Executive Council by secret ballot.
- 3.2.2.2 Officers will be elected at the mid - season General Membership Meeting (section 3.4.1 this document). The Officers - Elect will attend meetings and aid the sitting Council until they assume full responsibility when they are installed on or prior to June 1.
- 3.2.3 **Removal from Office:** Any elected or appointed Council member who misses twelve (12) regularly scheduled Council meetings in a seasonal year shall be automatically removed from office. Further, any member may be impeached and removed from office by seventy-five (75%) percent of the total DCSA members-in-good standing.
- 3.2.4 **Officer Duties:** Each officer shall accomplish the following tasks.
 - 3.2.4.1 **The President shall:**
 - 3.2.4.1.1 Preside at all DCSA meetings.
 - 3.2.4.1.2 Pass upon and approve all incurred DCSA bills.
 - 3.2.4.1.3 Appoint all DCSA non-elected DCSA Council positions, committees, and appeal boards with the goal of equitable representation among the member teams or clubs.
 - 3.2.4.1.4 Serve and cast one vote as an ex-officio member of all appointed DCSA committees and appeal boards.
 - 3.2.4.1.5 Serve as or appoint to all Association Committees, a nonvoting ex-officio member.
 - 3.2.4.1.6 Have access to all member team meetings.
 - 3.2.4.1.7 Serve as the DCSA delegate to all MYSA, U.S. Youth Soccer Association and USSF meetings unless he/she chooses to appoint an alternate delegate due to the inability to fulfill the obligation.
 - 3.2.4.1.8 Appoint a temporary successor for any vacant officers position except the President until the next general membership business meeting when the membership shall fill the position in the manner prescribed for officer elections.
 - 3.2.4.1.9 Be responsible for the Association operations and personnel.
 - 3.2.4.2 **The Vice-President For Division III (Recreation) and Division II (Intermediate) Affairs. (First Vice-President) shall:**
 - 3.2.4.2.1 Assume the duties of the President in his/her absence.
 - 3.2.4.2.2 Administer both divisions' business which includes, but is not limited to:
 - 3.2.4.2.2.2 Scheduling practice times and field availability:
 - 3.2.4.2.2.3 Organization and direction of all DCSA sponsored Tournaments, Cups, and Games except those specifically the responsibility of the Second Vice-President.
 - 3.2.4.3 **The Vice-president for Division I (State Division) Affairs (Second Vice-president) shall:**
 - 3.2.4.3.1 Assume the duties of the President in the absence of this individual and the First Vice- President
 - 3.2.4.3.2 Administer the division's business which includes, but is not limited to:
 - 3.2.4.3.2.1 Serve as the Association Representative to the Memphis Shelby Soccer Federation (MSSF) and to the Division I members. Organization and management of the DCSA Division I (State Division) league play.
 - 3.2.4.3.2.2 Organization and direction of the DCSA sponsored Division I Tournaments, that may be awarded to DCSA.
 - 3.2.4.4 **The Vice-President for Girls Division Affairs (Third Vice-President) shall:**

- 3.2.4.4.1 Assume the duties of the President in the absence of this individual and the First Vice-President and Second Vice Presidents
- 3.2.4.4.2 Administer the Girls Divisions business which includes, but is not limited to:
 - 3.2.4.4.2.1 Serve as the Association Representative to the Memphis Shelby Soccer Federation (MSSF) Girls Divisions and the Girls Division members. Organization and management of the DCSA Girls divisions in inter - league and State League play.
 - 3.2.4.4.2.2 Organization and direction of any DCSA sponsored Girls Tournaments, that may be awarded to DCSA.
- 3.2.4.5 **The Secretary shall:**
 - 3.2.4.5.1 Record and distribute the minutes of all DCSA and Council minutes.
 - 3.2.4.5.2 Maintain copies of all DCSA records and mailing lists.
 - 3.2.4.5.3 Distribute routine correspondence to the Council and general mailings to the membership.
 - 3.2.4.5.4 Maintain and distribute changes to the DCSA Constitution,. By-Laws or Rules and Regulations
 - 3.2.4.5.5 Respond to correspondence directed to DCSA.
 - 3.2.4.5.6 Provide administrative assistance to the Council.
 - 3.2.4.5.7 Serve as the DCSA Polling Committee for all general and special elections.
 - 3.2.4.5.8 Provide its most recent status report delivered to the Secretary of State under Mississippi Statutes, Section 79-1 1 -391
 - 3.2.4.5.9 Maintain an alphabetical list of voting members. This shall include the members address.
 - 3.2.4.5.10 All records must be maintained for a minimum period of 3 years
- 3.2.4.6 **The Registrar Shall:**
 - 3.2.4.6.1 Administer all USSF, U.S. Youth Soccer Association, MYSA and DCSA rules and regulations for player registration.
 - 3.2.4.6.2 Maintain records and detailed reports an the number of player registrations.
 - 3.2.4.6.3 Respond to all routine correspondence about DCSA registration matters.
 - 3.2.4.6.4 Serve as the Registrar for all DCSA sponsored tournaments.
 - 3.2.4.6.5 Accomplish all required DCSA approval/disapproval actions on all player registration -related actions such as player passes, player releases, player transfers player drops, etc.
 - 3.2.4.6.6 Maintain and provide to the Secretary, an alphabetical list of all its members that are entitled to vote. The list must show the address of each member.
- 3.2.4.7 **The Treasurer shall:**
 - 3.2.4.7.1 Keep records on all DCSA property
 - 3.2.4.7.2 Maintain a detailed accounting of income and expenditures thereof.
 - 3.2.4.7.3 Deposit all funds upon receipt into the established DCSA account.
 - 3.2.4.7.4 Prepare a complete financial report for all MYSA Business and Council Meetings.

3.2.4.7.5 Sign all DCSA checks with a co-signature of the President or other Executive Council members.

3.2.4.7.6 Help prepare the annual DCSA budget.

3.2.4.7.7 Maintain all records/reports for DCSA funded clinics.

3.2.4.7.8 Respond to all routine correspondence about DCSA financial matters.

3.2.4.7.9 Serve as a DCSA Tournament Official when required.

3.2.4.8 **The Head Coach shall:**

3.2.4.8.1 Be responsible for providing youth coach training to all DCSA Coaches

3.2.4.8.2 Serve as immediate liaison to coaches on training and fitness related issues

3.2.4.8.3 Aid the Secretary in disseminating information, correspondence and policies to the DCSA coaches.

3.2.4.8.4 Respond to all routine correspondence about DCSA Coaching matters.

3.2.4.8.5 Have been, or is currently, a DCSA registered soccer coach and a USSF licensed coach.

3.2.4.9 **The Head Referee shall:**

3.2.4.9.1 Provide the referees of DCSA with the necessary training in the abilities, knowledge, and skills of the Game in order that they may provide the proper and safe playing environment for the players

3.2.4.9.2. Schedule and administer the referee program within DCSA.

3.2.4.9.3 Schedule annual assessments for and verify the abilities of referees within the program.

3.2.4.9.4 Respond to all routine correspondence about DCSA referee matters.

3.2.4.9.5 Be a currently licensed USSF official.

3.3 **Membership**

3.3.1 **Eligibility:** All persons interested in playing soccer under DCSA jurisdiction must make application by submitting a completed approved registration form along with the seasonal dues to the Registrar, the President or an appointed agent of the Council.

3.3.1.1 Member (defined) To be a voting member of DCSA you must be:

3.3.1.2 A parent and/or guardian including spouses in extended families.

3.3.1.3 An Executive Council approved DCSA Coach who may not be a parent

3.3.1.4 A current, active DCSA referee

3.3.2 Membership Approval Authority: The Council shall have sole power to determine membership qualification; and to accept or reject any applicant.

3.3.3 **Obligations of Members:** The members' obligations are:

3.3.3.1 To complete and submit the following items to the Council for file and/or their approval in accordance with established deadlines.

3.3.3.1.1 Approved registration form.

3.3.3.1.2 The seasonal membership fee as determined by the Council.

3.3.3.1.3 To pay all dues and fees as required herein.

- 3.3.3.1.4 To attend all practices, games and meetings whenever possible.
- 3.3.3.1.5 To support the Association Officers, Appointees and Coaches; and uphold and abide by the Constitution, By-Laws and Rules & Regulations of DCSA, MYSA, USYSA and USSF.
- 3.3.3.2 **The Members' rights are:**
 - 3.3.3.2.1 To be present and cast one vote at all membership business meetings.
 - 3.3.3.2.2 To have qualified teams participate in MYSA sponsored & sanctioned tournaments.
 - 3.3.3.2.3 To have qualified individuals hold DCSA Council offices if elected in accordance with the provisions of this document.
 - 3.3.3.2.4 To participate fully in all DCSA programs for which DCSA is eligible.
- 3.3.4 Membership Dues: The annual dues policies are as follows:
 - 3.3.4.1 Dues shall be determined by the Executive Council each year and will adequately fund DCSA programs for which they are collected.
 - 3.3.4.2 All dues shall be paid upon demand by the Council.
 - 3.3.4.3 Any member, who does not pay their annual dues as provided herein, shall give cause for immediate suspension after a fifteen (15) day period.
- 3.3.5 **Associate Member:** This membership category is available to any individual who, although does not have a child playing within the Association; is not a Referee or Coach, but wishes to be an active participant or supporter of the Desoto County Soccer Association. Incorporated. This may include adult league players. All individuals who hold this type of membership must meet all specified membership obligations in order to remain in good standing and retain the specified right and privileges of this type membership. These rights and obligations are:
 - 3.3.5.1 **The Associate Members Rights are:**
 - 3.3.5.2 To be present and be allowed to be heard at all membership business meetings.
 - 3.3.5.3 To be included on the DCSA Mailing list and receive DCSA member information.
 - 3.3.5.4 To participate as an appointed Member on any DCSA committee except the Protest and Appeals Committee and the Rules and Revisions Committee.
 - 3.3.5.5 The Associate Members Obligations are:
 - 3.3.5.6 To pay all dues and fees as set by the Executive Council.
 - 3.3.5.7 To comply with the Constitution, By-Laws and rules and regulations of DCSA, MYSA, USSF and USYSA.
- 3.4 **Meetings**
 - 3.4.1 **Annual General Meeting:** DCSA shall hold a General Membership meeting each year. The General Membership meeting shall take place during the winter break between the Fall and Spring Seasons.
 - 3.4.1.2 The Rules and Revisions Committee is a Standing committee of DCSA in accordance with the DCSA By Laws. The committee shall be appointed by the President and shall consist of the Past President or appointed chairperson and four non-Council members. The committee will review and make recommendation on each proposal to be presented to the AGM prior to the submission of the proposal for consideration by the AGM. The committee is empowered to submit it's own proposals to the AGM.

- 3.4.1.3 All AGM proposals must be submitted in compliance with these established procedures. Any submitted proposal which does not meet the process requirements, shall not be considered by the Rules and Revisions Committee and the AGM membership.
- 3.4.1.3.1 The proposals may be submitted by any member of the Association.
- 3.4.1.3.2 Proposals must be submitted in writing, citing the current sections to be changed, the exact wording on the change being submitted, and the justification for the proposed changes. Additional documentation may be attached to the proposal if necessary.
- 3.4.1.3.3 All proposals must be postmarked or hand delivered to the Chairman, Rules and Revisions Committee, not later than 30 days prior to the scheduled date of the AGM. Proposals postmarked or delivered after this date will not be considered by the Committee or the AGM.
- 3.4.1.3.4 Copies of each proposal may be obtained from the Committee.
- 3.4.2 **Special Meetings:** This type of meeting may be called at any time by the President or upon written demand of one third (1/3) or more of the total membership - in - good standing. The DCSA President shall call any properly demanded membership meeting within two weeks of receipt of the mandatory registered demand letter legibly signed by at least the required number of members.
- 3.4.3 **Executive Council Meetings:** The Executive Council shall meet once each month. Should the Council need to meet more often, it shall have the authority to do so. Council Members will be notified of meetings by the Secretary. Four of Nine of the Council members must be in attendance for voting purposes.
- 3.4.4 **Meeting Policies:** All meetings shall conform to the following policies except for the appointment of an AGM Parliamentarian.
 - 3.4.4.1 The Secretary shall give written or published notice one (1) week in advance of the special called meeting to all concerned parties. In the case of a Special Meeting, its specified purpose shall be embodied in the required notice and no other matter shall be considered at the meeting.
 - 3.4.4.2 The President or a majority of the Council may allow guests to attend and/or speak to them, provided said guests give 48 hour prior written notice of their desire to address the Council, including an itemized a-a and list of the guests to attend.
 - 3.4.4.3 The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order will be used to conduct them.
 - 3.4.4.4 The President will appoint a Parliamentarian for the AGM to serve as an advisor on the application of Robert's Rules of Order.
 - 3.4.4.5 The following order of business shall be followed at all regular meetings of the Association and the Council.
 - 3.4.4.6 Roll Call
 - 3.4.4.7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting
 - 3.4.4.8 Communications
 - 3.4.4.9 Report of the President and other Council Members
 - 3.4.4.10 Financial Report of the Treasurer
 - 3.4.4.11 Reports of Other Committees
 - 3.4.4.12 Age Divisional Reports
 - 3.4.4.13 Unfinished Business
 - 3.4.4.14 New Business

- 3.4.4.15 For the Good of The Game
- 3.4.4.16 Adjournment
- 3.5 Discipline & Protest
 - 3.5.1 **Policy:** The objective of the DCSA Disciplinary and protest process is to equitably and justly consider and resolve every properly filed disciplinary and protest action at the lowest possible of DCSA while protecting the rights of the involved individuals. In order to achieve this objective, DCSA shall:
 - 3.5.1.1 Require the existence of a Disciplinary and Protest Committee to conduct Administrative Disciplinary and/or Protest Hearings for appropriate actions and/or protests as outlined herein. Such actions and/or protests do not include the defined automatic violations and/or penalties contained within DCSA Constitution, By - Laws and Rules and Regulations.
 - 3.5.1.2 Have appropriate and equitable membership on a Standing Discipline and Protest Committee.
 - 3.5.1.3 Ensure a documented fair and impartial hearing and resolution process by the Discipline and Protest Committee.
 - 3.5.1.4 Maintain an equitable and timely documented appeals process for an individual or team who is adversely affected by a decision of the Executive Council. The decision and/or imposed penalties are in full force and binding on all interested parties until overruled by the next higher level of the established Discipline and Protest Appeal Committee structure.
 - 3.5.1.5 Require an individual or team to exhaust all administrative remedies though USSF before pursuing legal action. A violation of this requirement shall constitute an immediate and automatic expulsion from DCSA and MYSA of the party instituting the legal action personally or through an attorney. Any expelled or removed party:
 - 3.5.1.5.1 Shall forfeit all moneys paid to DCSA for committing the act which led to expulsion, removal, or cancellation of DCSA membership.
 - 3.5.1.5.2 May apply for reinstatement at any time as provided in Section 3.3 of these By - Laws.
 - 3.5.1.6 Require the pursuit of all administrative remedies of the circumstances including the existence of a serious emergency situation which threatens irreparable injury to the party; the lack of adequate time to exhaust the prescribed administrative remedies; and/or any other reasons.
 - 3.5.2 Discipline & Protest Committee: This standing Committee shall adhere to the following operational policies:
 - 3.5.2.1 The Discipline & Protest Committee shall:
 - 3.5.2.1.1 Consist of any individual Association members.
 - 3.5.2.1.2 Only act on all appropriate disciplinary cases and protests which involve this Association.
 - 3.5.2.1.3 Each committee member shall have full participatory rights and one vote in all matters except any action involving themselves or their team. The President or an appointed Executive Council Member shall only vote to break a tie vote of the committee. A simple majority vote of the committee is sufficient to take action on any considered matter.
 - 3.5.2.1.4 Follow the DCSA committee operating procedures (Section 3.5.3)
 - 3.5.3 **Committee Operating Procedure:** These elements include the following requirements:
 - 3.5.3.1 Appeal to the Executive Council
 - 3.5.3.2 Appeal to the Discipline & Protest Committee

- 3.5.4 **Protest and Appeals Procedures:** These procedures must be followed in order to either initiate a protest or a disciplinary action hearing. Protest able and/or disciplinary actions are violations of the USSF USYSA, MYSA and DCSA Constitutions, By-Laws and Administrative Rules or Rules and Regulations, a DCSA officer Decision; and established organizational committees decisions except in the resolution of league or tournament game protests. These game protest decisions by the Executive Council are a final resolution of the issues.
- 3.5.4.1 The following procedures apply to initiate a protest, hearing, and/or disciplinary action at the Executive Council level. The initial level with responsibility for the requested action.
- 3.5.4.1.1 All protest able violations and proposed disciplinary actions shall be received in writing by the DCSA President within seven (7) calendar days of the alleged violation(s) with a \$25 hearing fee, refunded if the appeal is won. The submitted letter shall include the alleged violation; a detailed discussion of the incident; the identity of all involved parties; the appropriate citation of the violated USSF, USYSA, MYSA and/or DCSA document and/or administrative rules and regulations; and any appropriate, necessary documents. If necessary, the Executive Council shall conduct a fair and impartial hearing within (14) days to determine the merits of the charge. All involved parties shall be present at this hearing which is the subject to the documentation requirements herein. If the Executive Council elect to discipline the involved party, their decision is subject to appeal to the Discipline and Protest Committee.
- 3.5.4.2 The following procedures apply to initiate a protest, hearing, and/or disciplinary action at the Discipline & Protest Committee level, the second level with responsibility for the requested action.
- 3.5.4.2.1 All protestable violations and proposed disciplinary actions shall be received in writing by the DCSA President within seven (7) calendar days of the Executive Council Hearing with a \$50 hearing fee refunded if the appeal is won. The submitted letter shall include the alleged violation; a detailed discussion of the incident; the identity of all involved parties; the appropriate citation of the violated USSF USYSA, MYSA and/or DCSA document and/or administrative rules and regulations and any appropriate, necessary documents, including the action of the Executive Council. If necessary, the Disciplinary and Protest Committee shall conduct a fair and impartial hearing within (14) days to determine the merits of the charge. All involved parties shall be present at this hearing which is the subject to the documentation requirements herein. If the Disciplinary and Protest Committee elect to uphold the decision of the Executive Council, their decision is subject to appeal to the District Discipline and Protest Committee.
- 3.5.5 **Hearing Participant Rights:** The utmost objective in either DCSA Administrative Disciplinary or Protest Hearing on the Executive Council or Discipline and Protest Committee level is to reach a just and equitable resolution to the alleged actions and/or violations while protecting all participants' rights in a fact finding meeting by a body of fair and impartial knowledgeable and experienced soccer volunteers. To this end, the following participant rights shall be observed by the hearing body members.
- 3.5.5.1 Any party, who must defend themselves against protest and/or alleged misconduct actions, shall be entitled:
- 3.5.5.1.1 To participate in any and all levels of DCSA hearings to the allegations against them.
- 3.5.5.1.2 To present pertinent and applicable documents, personal statements, and witnesses at any such hearings.
- 3.5.5.1.3 To have an advisor with them at any such hearing. This advisor cannot be an attorney or any other member of the legal profession. The same requirement exists for any soccer volunteer or paid association employee who serves in this advisory capacity.
- 3.5.5.1.4 To question the party who requested the disciplinary action or initiated the protest. The party referred to herein may be knowledgeable representative in the case of a team or organization.
- 3.5.5.1.5 To have all rules and procedures outlined in these By-Laws observed by the hearing committee.
- 3.5.5.1 Any aggrieved party, who loses a protest or is disciplined for misconduct actions, shall be entitled:
- 3.5.5.1.1 To participate in any and all levels of DCSA and MYSA appeal hearings pertaining to the allegations against them.

- 3.5.5.1.2 To present pertinent and applicable documents, personal statements, and witnesses at any such hearings.
- 3.5.5.1.3 To have an advisor participate with them at any such hearing. This advisor cannot be an attorney or any other member of the legal profession. This same requirement exists for any soccer volunteer or paid organization employee who serves in this advisory capacity.
- 3.5.5.1.4 To have all rules and procedures outlined in these By-Laws observed by the hearing committee.
- 3.5.5.1.5 To appeal a final DCSA Executive Council decision to the District Disciplinary and Protest Committee.
- 3.5.5.1.6 To appeal through the following line of Soccer Authority with the appropriate established MYSA, USSF and USYSA Association fees. These fees are currently:
 - 3.5.5.1.6.1 MYSA Protest & Appeals Committee (\$100.00)
 - 3.5.5.1.6.2 US Youth Soccer Association Region III Appeals Committee (\$100.00)
 - 3.5.5.1.6.3 USYSA National Appeals Committee (\$150.00)
 - 3.5.5.1.6.4 USYSA Executive Committee (\$150.00)
 - 3.5.5.2.6.5 USYSA National Youth Council (\$150.00)
 - 3.5.5.2.6.6 USSF Board of Directors (\$150.00)

3.6 **Operational Policies**

- 3.6.1 **Standing Committees:** The President, with Council approval, shall appoint two standing committees. They are committees, as it deems necessary.
- 3.6.2 **Players Right:** Neither this Association nor any member may prevent any high school student from DCSA participation because of the individual is playing a school sport, i.e. soccer or any other school-played sport.
- 3.6.3 **Game permission:** The Executive Council must approve all games played in Desoto County. Teams playing out of state must request Council approval in writing and obtain appropriate travel permits.
- 3.6.4 **Automatic Disciplinary Actions:** The Council may automatically discipline a team which violates established DCSA & MYSA policies within the prescribed disciplinary action(s) The following penalties have been established for the stated violations:
 - 3.6.4.1 Any team playing non-affiliated teams without DCSA / MYSA permission following Council notification of this team's status may be fined up to fifty dollars (\$50).
 - 3.6.4.2 Any team who plays knowingly against suspended teams or clubs may be fined fifty dollars (\$50).
 - 3.6.4.3 A team who knowingly uses a suspended player or players may be fined up to fifty dollars (\$50) for each such player and shall forfeit every game in which the player or players participated.
- 3.7 Every member shall take every precaution to prevent disorder at games. The failure to comply with this requirement shall be referred to the Executive Council for appropriate action.
 - 3.7.1 **Miscellaneous Policies:** This Association shall abide by the following operating policies:
 - 3.7.1.2 The reimbursement of Council and DCSA Committee members official business expenses.
 - 3.7.1.3 A majority of full voting members present shall constitute a quorum to conduct DCSA business.
 - 3.7.1.4 This Associations dissolution for any reason shall result in its assets distribution to the MYSA.

3.7.1.5 A bonafide member of concerned MYSA teams or individuals shall not participate in the decision making process of a DCSA dispute, claim, protest, or appeal. The decision making process includes the deliberations and votes of the DCSA responsible resolution body.

3.8 Savings and Amendments

3.8.1 If any word, phrase sentence, or other provision Of these By-Laws or it's application to any person or circumstances is held invalid this finding shall not affect the other words, phrases, clauses, sentences, on provisions and / or applications of these By-Laws, and to this end, the provisions of these By-Laws are declared to be severable

3.8.2 **Amendments:** These By-Laws shall be made only at an AGM by a simple majority of the votes allowed under a duly constituted quorum. Proposed amendments must be submitted in accordance with established DCSA Rules and Revisions Process.

4.0 Section for future use

General Policies

5.1 Purpose and Objectives

5.1.1 **Purpose:** DCSA General Policies exist to define the provisions which are applicable to all DCSA members and which are not covered elsewhere in the DCSA Constitution and By Laws.

5.1.2 **Objective:** These policies are designed to provide sound administration and management of the various DCSA programs.

5.2 **Divisions of Play:** DCSA will offer Division III (recreational) soccer in the Under 6, 8,10, 12, 14 and Adult Divisions. Adult, Girls, Division I (State Division) and Division II (Intermediate and U16 & U19) playing divisions will be formed by DCSA whenever sufficient interest would permit formation of those divisions and, in the opinion of the Executive Council, not adversely impact DCSA. Only Desoto County residents or members may play in the Adult Entry Level Divisions. The rules followed in thee divisions will be the same as in all age divisions of DCSA with noted variations for small sided and adult games.

5.2.1 **Division I - Select Teams:** Division I teams are formed by trial or coach selection for the purpose of competitive Play and travel.

5.2.2 **Division I Limits:** DCSA will allow Division I teams at the U12 level and above only. DCSA will group teams whenever possible.

5.2.3 **Division I Trials:** Division I teams must hold trials in advance of Division II & III (Recreation Division) registration so that players not selected for Division I can be included in the player - for Division II & III teams.

5.3 **Division II – Intermediate:** Division II is the intermediate playing level of soccer in DCSA. All U16 and U19 teams are designated Division II by MYSA Division II teams are formed by draft and may remain together during a two year age bracket. All Division II teams must be age leveled within 20% of the entire Division.

5.3.1 **Division II Limits:** Division II (Intermediate and U16 & U19) playing divisions will be formed by DCSA whenever sufficient interest would permit formation of those divisions and, in the opinion of the Executive Council, not adversely impact DCSA.

5.3.2 **Division II Player assignment process:** If Division II teams are formed the Executive Council will determine the method for the initial fall draft and spring season supplements.

5.4 **Division III - Recreation:** Division III is the least competitive recreational level of soccer in DCSA Emphasis should be placed on skills development and soccer for fun.

5.4.1 **Placement of players:** DCSA will use a blind draft system for team placement of Division III players. All youth wishing to play Division III soccer must enter DCSA through the blind draft. Division II teams, when formed, will allow coaches to be involved in the draft process.

- 5.4.2 **Order of selection:** The order of selection in the draft for the Fall season will be determined by a blind draw or computer random sort. In the Spring, similar methods will be used to supplement team rosters short of a full complement and add new teams if required. If a computer sort is not used, the Executive Council will assign players to each team in a manner designed to maintain age leveling within the age division
- 5.4.3 **Protected Players:** A head coach's child will count as the team's 4th draft choice. One assistant coach's child will count as the team's 3rd draft choice. If the coach/assistant coach has two children on the team, they will count as the second and third draft choices. Once a team is awarded a player by virtue of his parent being chosen as an assistant coach, no other player will be so assigned as long as the original player remains on that team. The computer sort requires that all coaches' children be assigned to the team prior to the running of the program.
- 5.4.4 **Disbanded Teams:** Returning players on a team that has been disbanded will return to the draft.
- 5.4.5 **Elimination of team prior to draft:** If, due to the number of players participating, a team has to be eliminated prior to the draft. A team with a head coach returning takes precedence over a team without a head coach. If they both have head coaches, the team with more players will remain. If further tie breaking procedures are needed, the Executive Council will determine the remaining team.
- 5.5 **Registration Fees / Dues:** The Executive Council will set the registration fees/dues each season.
- 5.5.1 **Player registration:** A youth is considered registered only when the Executive Council has received the required fee and the completed registration form, including the name of the primary insurance carrier, signed by the youth's parents or legal guardian.
- 5.5.1.1 **Registration Form:** A registration form must be signed. Originals will be kept by the Executive Council and a copy is given to the coach. Parents or legal guardians must note their primary insurance carrier on the registration form.
- 5.5.1.2 **Enrollment in DCSA:** All Division players II & III must be entered into the draw/draft for team placement when entering DCSA each year or when moving from one age division to another (No player nor parent/legal guardian may choose which team a youth will play on) A coach will have the opportunity to select his/her child in the draft.
- 5.5.1.2.1 **Re - enrollment of an inactive player:** If a youth does not participate during a soccer year (8/1/A-7/31 /B), the youth must re-enter DCSA through the draft.
- 5.5.1.3 **Siblings:** Siblings have the opportunity to play on the same Division II or III team. If a player moves up to an age division in which they have a sibling, the parents/legal guardian must decide, prior to the draft, if they want their children playing on the same team. If so, they must also determine, prior to the draft, if the children will play on the team of the older child or if they will enter the draft.
- 5.5.1.4 **Requirements to play up in a higher age division:** Any youth desiring to "play up" to their next age division must present a written request signed by their parent/legal guardian when registering to play in DCSA. The youth must pass a skills test administered by an Executive Council appointed committee. The Executive Council may waive the skills test if it feels that the transfer is appropriate, in the best interest of the player, and is sufficiently convinced of its necessity. If the youth is allowed to play up he/she must remain in that age division for the entire year, unless the older age team is disbanded.
- 5.5.1.5 **Requesting off a team:** A youth may be requested off of a team following the fall season. The youth must be placed on another team through the draft system. Once the request is honored, the youth must remain on the new team until the end of the current season. The youth may not be redrawn by the team from which he/she requested to be removed. A youth may not request NOT to play for any coach in any age group that has three teams or less.
- 5.5.1.6 **Limit to Special requests:** A youth may not request NOT to play for any coach in any age group that has three teams or less.
- 5.5.1.7 **Consequences for requesting off a team:** A player requesting off of a team for the Spring season will be required to pay a registration fee adequate to cover the cost of a new uniform.

- 5.5.1.8 **Eligibility of new players for District / State tournament:** A child may play in the District and/or State tournaments only if they are on a team roster for two weeks or play in at least two league games with that team prior to tournament play.
- 5.5.2 **Refunds:** Refunds are made on the following scale:
50% before draft
No refund after draft
- 5.5.3 **Administration of Funds:** DCSA will administer all funds to the clubs, leagues and organizations in which its teams participate in outside of Desoto County and Fall, District and State Tournaments. Said funds will be collected from the teams before being paid by DCSA. Fees for other invitational tournaments will be paid directly by the team (s) wishing to participate. With prior Executive Council approval, Division I teams may make specific payments to MSSF for Referee, bond and membership fees.
- 5.5.4 **Donations:** All Division I, II & III teams must obtain an introduction letter authenticating the teams' affiliation as a nonprofit organization, and will provide the DCSA Tax Identification Number. If a donation is provided, DCSA will present appropriate correspondence thanking the donor.
- 5.6 **Uniforms and Players Equipment:**
- 5.6.1 **Uniform Insignia:** Only the DCSA logo and player number will be allowed on uniforms; with Executive Council approval. Sponsor and team names may be added at cost to the team.
- 5.6.1.1 **Shin guards:** All players in DCSA / MYSA must wear shin guards. Anyone not wearing shin guards that at the decision of the game referee a reasonable degree of protection and are age group specific will not participate. Parents are responsible for obtaining shin guards. Shin guards must be completely covered by the uniform socks at all times.
- 5.6.1.2 **Sliding Pants:** Sliding pants may be worn only if they are manufactured of material that is a solid color that is the predominate color of the players uniform shorts. Players not complying with this USSF / MYSA / DCSA policy will be sent off until the uniform is corrected.
- 5.6.1.3 **Shoes:** Players must wear shoes that are manufactured for field or turf use. While tennis shoes are acceptable, baseball or football shoes, no matter how altered, may not be worn.
- 5.6.1.4 **Casts and / or splints:** No player may participate in a game or practice wearing any type of splint or cast, no matter how well padded or protected.
- 5.6.1.5 **The ball sizes used will be:**
U6 thru U8 - size #3
U10 thru U12-size#4
U14 thru Adult - size #5
- 5.7 **League Standings and Tournament Eligibility:**
- 5.7.1 **DCSA Scoring System:** Each gender / group will be scored:
A. Win = 6 points
B. Tie = 3 points
C. Loss = 0 point
D. 1 point for team goal (Up to 3)
E. 1 point for shutout
F. 10 points maximum per game
- 5.7.2 **Exemptions:**
A. Teams participating in play outside of DCSA will count points only for games played against other DCSA teams in that age/gender division
B. Games played against "non-legal" DCSA, dissimilar age division or other teams not defined as normal league play, will not be scored for League Standings.
- 5.7.3 **Tie Breaking Procedures:** In case of a tie between teams eligible for championship and runner-up standings, tie breakers would be applied in the following order:

- A. Winner of head - to - head competition
- B. Winner of mini-game (U8-U10, two 5 min. halves, U12 & above, two 10 min. halves)
- C. Kicks from penalty - (FIFA application)
 - it is the responsibility of each team to know if they are involved in a TIE BREAKER game, to know the time and place, AND to be at the game site ready to play at the scheduled time.

5.7.4 **Selection of Champions and Runners-Up:** In Division II & III, the team which wins first place in the Spring will represent DCSA as team "A" in the District Tournament. The first place team in the Fall will be team "B". If the teams are the same, the second place team in the Spring will be team "B". Additional teams will be chosen according to the Spring Standings. Teams must declare their intent to participate in the fall and/or spring tournaments by the mid-season at a point designated by the Executive Council.

5.7.5 **Participation in USYSA sanctioned tournaments:** Any team wanting to participate in a USYSA tournament must receive Council approval. If a limited number of teams are able to participate, the Council will determine which teams will be eligible to participate. All fees and entry forms must be submitted to the Executive Council two weeks prior to the tournaments deadline. All teams are responsible for submitting travel permit requests, tournament requests & player passes within proper time limits. Any costs associated with these requests when submitted late, will be assumed by the requesting team.

5.8 **Coaching and Coaches responsibilities:**

5.8.1 **Council Approval of Coaches:** The Executive Council will review all applications and either approve or disapprove. Only approved coaches may be on immediate sidelines and act in a coaching capacity. No person may serve on more than two teams in an official coaching capacity.

5.8.2 **Application to Coach:** Anyone interested in coaching in DCSA must submit the proper application to the Executive Council.

5.8.3 **Availability of Teams / Coaches:** The approval of a coach does not necessarily mean a team is available. When a coach is needed, the following order will be used in awarding a team:

- A. Present Assistant Coach (if licensed) of the team in need.
- B. A Head Coach (if licensed) currently in the age division.
- C. A Head Coach (if licensed) moving up into the age division.
- D. Present Assistant Coach (unlicensed) of the team in need.
- E. Any Head Coach (unlicensed).

5.8.4 **Familiarity with rules:** All Coaches must become familiar with, and follow the Constitution, By-Laws, and Rules and Regulations of DCSA. Coaches will be provided with one copy at the initial coaches meeting. It is the coach's responsibility to make his copies available to his team. Additional copies may be purchased for the cost of reproduction.

5.8.5 **Coaches Training:** Coaches must attend at least one coaches or referee clinic/seminar each year.

5.8.6 **Limit of Assistant Coaches:** No team may have more than two assistant coaches. Only one of the two may have their child protected in the draft.

5.8.7 **Team Roster:** The Executive Council will provide the coach with a team roster that will include the players name, address birth-date, and phone number.

5.8.8 **Travel Permits:** All Division II and III coaches must receive Executive Council approval and proper travel permits when playing non-DCSA affiliated teams.

5.3.9 **Coaches License:** Division I & II coaches must have, or obtain by the start of the fall season, a minimum class E coaching license, or submit a Request for Waiver to the Executive Council of DCSA. The request should include won / loss records, District and State victories, references, player achievements and any other information supporting the Request for Waiver. If there are more licensed coaches than there are teams available, teams will be awarded to the coach who has the higher-level license or has been licensed longer.

- 5.3.10 **Games and Practice Scheduling:** Games and practices for, all Divisions, must be scheduled by the Executive Council or its designated appointee. Use of DCSA designated fields shall be approved by the Executive Council or its designee.
- 5.9 **Playing Rules**
- 5.9.1 **FIFA Laws:** Unless otherwise noted, rules established by FIFA will be followed.
- 5.9.2 **Field Specifications:** The playing field sizes will be scaled down according to the MYSA and USYSA short sided modified playing rules as adapted by DCSA and MYSA.
- 5.9.3 **Fifty per cent playing time guaranteed:** Each youth participating in Division II & III soccer will play at least one half of each league game. The only exception will be in the case of disciplinary reasons, which must be reported to the referee prior to the game by the coach. Punishment for not adhering to this rule is:
1st offense- forfeiture of game by team. If team lost the game. two (2) team points will be taken from the teams league standings
2nd offense - the same as 1st offense plus 1 game suspension of coach active in head capacity.
3rd offense- the same as 1st offense plus termination of the coach from DCSA for the remainder of the soccer year.
- 5.9.4 **Playing times:** Playing times for the various age divisions are as follows:
U6 and U8 - four 10 minute quarters (total playing time = 40 minutes)
U10 - Four 12 and 1/2 minute quarters (total playing time = 50 minutes)
U12- Four 15 minute quarters (total playing time = 60 minutes)
U14 - Two 35 minute halves (total playing time = 70 minutes)
U16 - Two 40 minute halves (total playing time = 80 minutes)
U19 - Two 45 minute halves (total playing time = 90 minutes)
Adult - Four 20 minute quarters (total playing time = 80 minutes)
The Executive Council has discretionary power to limit playing times as necessary
- 5.9.5 **Sliding Tackles:** Sliding tackles will not be permitted in the U6, 8,10 and Adult divisions (Divisions II & III). The rule is designed to help prevent injury and poor soccer. Punishment for player committing a slide tackle:
1st Offense - verbal warning, indirect free kick for opposition. Caution (yellow card) for adults.
2nd Offense - Caution (yellow card) indirect free kick for the opposition. Ejection (red card) with replacement allowed for adults. Offending player serves one game suspension.
3rd Offense - Ejection (red card) with replacement allowed indirect free kick for opposition. Ejected player may participate in next game unless he has been ejected for sliding tackle in a previous game in which case the player would serve a one game suspension.
- 5.9.6 **Injury re-starts:** Anytime a referee stops play for an injury and the game is restarted with a drop ball signifying that there was no foul, the injured player must come out of the game.
- 5.9.7 **Violation of rules:** Any player, coach, DCSA official or parent determined to have violated the Constitution, By-Laws, and / or General Policies of the Desoto County Soccer Association shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Council of this Association.
- 5.9.8 **Team Conduct:** Each team and its' coaches are responsible for the actions and personal conduct of their team members coach, parent and spectators and is additionally responsible to ensure that its actions on and off the field do not bring discredit upon the team or Desoto County Soccer Association.
- 5.9.9 **Coaches and substitute area:** Coaches and player substitutes must remain on the bench or within twenty yards of the center line while the game is in progress. The coaches must remain at least 1 yard behind the touchline so as not to impede the movement or vision of the linesman.
- 5.9.10 **Spectators Area:** Parents and spectators must remain within the designated spectator's area (fence, line, or rope) The Referee may suspend the match until which time the offending parents or spectators comply or be removed.

- 5.9.11 **Mechanical Devices:** Coaches or parents may not use mechanical devices, such as bullhorns, amplifiers, or megaphone during the game.
- 5.9.12 **Manner of Coaching:** Coaches may provide limited direction to their players in a manner that is solely intended to be instructional and informative as to player positioning or team strategy during games. Critical, humiliating, and punishing threats or language shall not be directed towards any players by any coach.
- 5.9.13 **Referees judgment of field conditions:** The referees judgment with the regard to the physical condition of a field and its acceptability for play, and to the actual game and occurrences relating to the conduct of the game, and to those prerogatives or judgments inherently granted to the referee by FIFA shall not be challenged.
- 5.9.14 **Use of Profanity:** Coaches, players and substitutes shall not use profanity or make insulting or otherwise derogatory remarks or gestures directed to their own team, or to the opposing team or to the referees or spectators, nor shall they incite disruptive behavior.
- 5.10 **Awards Program**
- 5.10.1 **Coach of the Year:** Each year DCSA will select a Coach of the Year for Boys and Girls who will represent DCSA in District Competition. The Council will select a Coach of the Year for each age group from nominations submitted by DCSA members.
- 5.10.2 **Youth Referee of the Year:** Each year DCSA will select a Youth Referee of the Year for Boys and Girls who will represent DCSA in the District competition. The DCSA Head Referee will select the appropriate candidate after considering assessments, observations and feedback from coaches' evaluations.
- 6.0 **Disciplinary Actions for Misconduct by players and coaches:** For misconduct by players and coaches, certain disciplinary actions will be instituted as follows:
- 6.1 **Players found to be guilty of:**
- 6.1.1 Using profanity, either by word or gesture directed at himself or other players, referees coaches, DCSA officials or spectators will be sent oft (ejected) and receive a 1 game suspension. Profanity shall be defined as racial slurs, invocations of damnation by a deity, comments regarding personal body parts or bodily functions not generally used in gentle company or any variation of words describing the act of intercourse.
- 6.1.2 Making threats or threatening gestures against other players, referees, coaches, DCSA officials or spectators will receive a one to two game suspension.
- 6.1.3 Physically striking or fighting with another player, before, during or after the game will receive a one to three game suspension.
- 6.1.4 Physically pushing or striking any referee, coach or DCSA official will receive a one year suspension and/or legal action.
- 6.2 Coaches, assistant coaches, or team managers determined to be guilty of making threatening gestures or using profanity:
- 6.2.1 1st offense: Letter of reprimand and one game suspension.
- 6.2.2 2nd offense: Letter of reprimand and six month suspension.
- 6.2.3 3rd offense: Letter of reprimand and indefinite suspension as determined by the Executive Council.
- 6.2.4 Coaches, assistant coaches or team managers determined to be found guilty of striking or fighting with another coach, player, referee, DCSA official or spectator shall be suspended indefinitely until the Executive Council determines the length of the suspension.
- 6.3 **Disciplinary Actions**

6.3.1 Cautions - A "running total" of all Cautions shall be maintained on a "per season basis", with respect to Cautions a "season" shall be defined as either August 1 to December 31 or January 1 to July31 Each period shall be considered as separate and distinct from the other for purposes of applying disciplinary actions as outlined more specifically herein below. Cautions shall result in the following actions

Number of Cautions, Actions to be Taken

- 1st - 3rd Report to MYSA
- 4th Report to MYSA and count as an Ejection; individual disqualified from participating in next regularly scheduled game, unless, when added to any other Ejections which may be outstanding, then follow disciplinary actions outlined herein below for "Ejections", including the probationary and suspension rules
- 5th – 7th Report to MYSA
- 8th Report to MYSA and count as second Ejection; individual disqualified from participating in next 2 regularly scheduled games, unless, when added to any other Ejections which may be outstanding, then follow disciplinary actions outlined herein below for "Ejections", including the probationary and suspension rules.
- 9th – 11th Report to MYSA
- 12th Report to MYSA and count as third Ejection; individual disqualified from participating in any MYSA - Sanctioned event for the duration of season.

6.3.2 Ejections - A "running total" of all ejections shall be maintained on a "per season" basis. With respect to Ejections, a "season" shall be defined as a twelve (12) month period commencing on each August 1 and terminating on the following July 31. Ejections shall result in the following actions:

Number of Ejections, Action to be Taken

- 1st Report to MYSA; individual disqualified from participating in next regularly scheduled game.
- 2nd Report to MYSA; individual disqualified from participating in next 2 regularly scheduled games, and placed on probation for duration of season.
- 3rd Report to MYSA individual disqualified from participation in any MYSA Sanctioned event for duration of season.

6.4 Misconduct toward game officials (as mandated by U.S. Youth Soccer)
Misconduct against referees may occur before, during and after the match, including travel to and from the match. Misconduct may occur also at later times when directly related to duties of a game official as a referee.

6.4.1 Terms and referees as used in this rule.

6.4.1.1 Referee includes the following:

6.4.1.1.1 All currently registered USSF referees, linesmen, 4th officials or others duly appointed to assist in the officiating in a match.

- 6.4.1.1.2 Any non-licensed, non-registered person serving in an emergency capacity as a referee (under 6.4.1.1.1)
- 6.4.1.1.3 Any Club linesman
- 6.4.1.2 "Hearing" means a meeting of at least three (3) neutral members, one of which is designated or elected to serve as chairman. The hearing shall be conducted pursuant to guidelines established by the National State Association or Professional League.
- 6.4.1.3 Referee assault is an intentional act of physical violence upon a referee. Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting at or on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; 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.
- 6.4.1.4 Referee abuse is verbal statement or physical act 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, or verbally threatening a referee. NOTE: Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as "I'll get you after the game" or "you won't get out of here in one piece", shall be deemed referee abuse.
- 6.4.2 **Jurisdiction and Hearings**
- 6.4.2.1 **General:** When any amateur, professional player, coach, manager, club official or game official assaults or abuses a referee, the original jurisdiction to adjudicate the matter shall vest immediately in the responsible National State Association or Professional League which is affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation. When an allegation of assault is verified by the National State Association or the Professional League the person is automatically suspended until the hearing on the assault. The National State Association or Professional League must hold a hearing within thirty (30) days of the assault or, if applicable, the thirty day period provided by the last paragraph of Section 6.4.2 of this rule. If the Association or League does not adjudicate the matter within that period of time, original jurisdiction shall immediately vest in the National Appeals Committee to adjudicate the matter, to which the same provisions as to the term of suspension shall apply. Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind the automatic suspension. In cases of referee abuse: a hearing is held only when requested by the alleged assailant or otherwise deemed appropriate by the convening authority.
- 6.4.2.2 **Events and Tournaments** - In the event an assault on or abuse of a referee occurs in an event outside the players home state, the referee shall (1) immediately notify the Event/Tournament Chairman, and (2) forward a copy of the game report and his / her comments on the incident to the Event/Tournament Chairman and the National State Association President of the players home state.
- 6.4.2.2.1 The Event Tournament Chairman shall have the right to immediately convene a hearing at the site of the Event/Tournament, at which the player, his / her coach, and the game officials should be present. Information presented at this hearing shall promptly be relayed to the player's State President by the Event/Tournament Chairman, verbally and in writing; however, failure to provide written information shall not restrict the players home State Association from taking action with regard to any assault.
- 6.4.2.2.2 Final jurisdiction shall vest with the players home National State Association and a hearing shall be held by that National State Association within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the initial report of the assault on a referee.
- 6.4.3 **Penalties and Suspensions**
- 6.4.3.1 **Assault:** The player, coach, manager, or official committing the referee assault is automatically suspended for at least one (1) year from the time of the assault, unless serious injuries are inflicted, then the minimum suspension will be at least five (5) years. The National State Association or Professional League adjudicating the matter may not provide shorter period of suspension but, if circumstances warrant, may provide a longer period of suspension.

- 6.4.3.2 **Referee abuse:** The minimum suspension period for referee abuse shall be at least three (3) scheduled matches within the rules of the competition. The National State Association or Professional League adjudicating the matter may provide a longer period of suspension when circumstances warrant (e.g., habitual offenders)
- 6.4.4 **Appeals**
- 6.4.4.1 **Assaults:** A player, coach, manager, or official who is found to have committed the assault may appeal to the Appeals Committee by the following the procedures of 3.5 within thirty (30) days from receipt of the decision of the Association or League.
- 6.4.4.2 **Abuse:** A player, coach, manager, or official who is found to have committed the abuse may appeal the decision by following the appellate procedures of the respective National, State, Association, Division or Professional League.
- 6.4.5 **Procedures for Reporting Assault and Abuse**
- 6.4.5.1 Procedures for reporting of referee assault and/or abuse shall be developed and disseminated by the Referees Committee to all Federation registered referees for use in their National State Association.
- 6.4.5.2 Referees shall transmit a written report of the alleged assault and/or abuse within 48 hours of the incident (unless there is a valid reason for later reporting) to the President of the National State Association or Professional) League or their designees and the State Referee Administrator. For tournaments or special events, the referee shall transmit a written report to the tournament director on the day of the incident and to his home state SRA within 10 days of the incident.
- 6.4.6 **Rule Application:** This rule shall supersede all rules of affiliated Divisions, Associations, and Professional Leagues that pertain to assaults or abuse upon referees, linesmen, the manner and means of hearings, appeals, and re-hearings in matters pertaining thereto. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to restrict or limit any league, event/tournament, National State Association, or Professional League from applying equal or greater restrictions to anyone not listed in section 6.4.2 of this rule (i.e., a spectator associated with a club or team).
- 6.6 **Complaints and Grievances**
The Executive Council will formally address only complaints and grievances that have been submitted in writing and signed by the complainants. Appeals may be made in accordance with the DCSA Constitution and By-Laws.

As adopted by the Membership January 16, 1993
Revised by the Membership January 31, 1994
Revised by the Membership February 16, 2003