Heart of Texas Soccer Association

CONSTITUTION OF THE HEART OF TEXAS SOCCER ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE ONE

The name of this organization shall be the Heart of Texas Soccer Association.

ARTICLE TWO

The organization is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization.

ARTICLE THREE

The period of its duration is perpetual.

ARTICLE FOUR

The purposes for which the organization (hereinafter called "Association" or "HOTSA") is organized are:

1) To engage in the transaction of any or all lawful business for which a corporation may be incorporated under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and which are consistent with exemption from federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding sections of any future federal tax code;

2) To foster and advance the cause of soccer within the territory under the jurisdiction of the Association and to support and develop players for such competitions, the primary portion of which is to plan, establish, approve, and administer all rules and regulations of all activities sponsored by and under this Association (including all league play), and servicing of basic coaching clinics, referee clinics, and assessments and training and grading of coaches and referees on "as needed" basis.

3) To foster and advance a youth soccer program which will promote the ideas of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty and courage through organized amateur athletic competition.

ARTICLE FIVE

The Association shall have Members. Members, membership requirements and the rights and responsibilities of members shall be determined by the Board of Directors, as set forth in the Bylaws of the Association. The Association shall not discriminate in hiring or provision of services or in any other manner against any person on account of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin or age.

ARTICLE SIX

The Association shall be governed by a Board of Directors who shall be responsible to the Members of the Association. The members of the Board of Directors shall be elected for a period of one year and if re-elected may succeed themselves in office. Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting. The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Directors shall be as assigned by the Bylaws of the Association.

ARTICLE SEVEN

The fiscal year of the Association will be July 1 through June 30. The term of office for Directors shall begin on August 1 of each year and end on July 31st of the following year.

ARTICLE EIGHT

This Association shall represent all members falling within the boundary lines of McLennan County, Texas and/or person(s) choosing to register with Heart of Texas Soccer Association as their home association.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

ARTICLE NINE-TAX RESTRICTIONS

Conduct of Association as Nonprofit Corporation

This Association shall conduct its business in a manner conforming to the purposes as set forth in Article Four of its Articles of Incorporation, being careful to comply with all rules and regulations as set forth under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code so as to maintain its status as a nonprofit corporation.

Dissolution of Corporation

Upon the dissolution of the Association, The Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Association, dispose of all the assets of the Association exclusively for the purposes of the Association, in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, humanitarian, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Rule or Regulation), as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the District Court in which the principal office of the Association is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations as said court shall determine which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Distribution of Net Earnings

No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of any private individual, member, director, or officer of the Association (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Association affecting one or more of its purposes), and no private individuals member, director, or officer of the Association shall be entitled to a share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the Association.

Association will not Attempt to Influence Legislation

No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Association shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Other Tax Restrictions

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles of Incorporation, the Association will not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; and

The Association will distribute its income for each tax year at such time and in such manner as not to become subject to the Lax on undistributed income imposed by Section 4942 of the Internal Revenue code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; and

The Association will not engage in any act of self-dealing as defined in Section 4941(d) of the Internal Revenue code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; and

The Association will not retain any excess business holdings as defined in Section 4943(c) of the Internal Revenue code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; and

The Association will not make any investments in such manner as to subject it to tax under Section 4944 of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; and

The Association will not make any taxable expenditure as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Internal Revenue code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

ARTICLE TEN

Notice of the date designated and the location of the Annual Meeting will be submitted in writing to the full voting membership of the Association, at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual meeting.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

This Constitution may be amended only at annual meetings or at special meetings of the Members called for the specific purpose of amending these Articles of Incorporation. Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation shall be by two-thirds vote of the adult Members present and voting at such meeting. All voting Members of the Association must be furnished in writing, by physical or electronic means, at least thirty (30) days in advance, proposed amendments and notified of the time, date and place of the meeting.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

BYLAWS OF THE HEART OF TEXAS SOCCER ASSOCIATION

These are the Bylaws of the Heart of Texas Soccer Association (the 'Association' or 'HOT Soccer') duly adopted on June 9, 2026, at an organizational meeting of the Board of Directors named in the Constitution of the Association.

ARTICLE I - OFFICES

The principal office of the Association in the State of Texas shall be located in the City of Waco, County of McLennan, Texas. The Association may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Texas, as the Board of Directors may determine or as the affairs of the Association may require from time to time.

Registered Office and Registered,

The Association shall have and continuously maintain in the State of Texas a registered office, and a registered agent whose office is identical with such registered office, as required by the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical with the principal office of the Association, and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP IN ASSOCIATION

This Association shall be consist of the following three classes of members:

A. GENERAL MEMBER
   i. Membership shall consist of all parents and/or guardians of duly registered Association players under the age of eighteen, all parents and/or guardians of duly registered Central Texas Soccer Referee Association (CTSRA) referees under the age of eighteen, all duly registered Association players and CTSRA referees eighteen years of age or older, and all Association coaches and managers.
   ii. General Members shall have no voting privileges, except as specifically authorized by these Bylaws and the Constitution of the Association.
   iii. General members shall have limited speaking privileges during meetings of the HOT Soccer Board of Directors, as determined by the Officer of Board Member presiding.

B. ASSOCIATE MEMBER
   i. Any person not qualifying as a General Member who wishes to participate in the affairs of the Association may be an Associate Member if they meet the following criteria:
      a) have an interest in, and sympathy with, the purposes of the Association;
      b) adhere to the Constitution, Bylaws and other rules and regulations of the Association; and
      c) Approved for Membership by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
   ii. Associate Members must pay the full associate membership fee, as determined by the Board of Directors, as a prerequisite to membership and participation in the affairs of HOT Soccer.
   iii. Associate Members shall have no voting privileges.
   iv. Associate Members shall have limited speaking privileges during meetings of the HOT Soccer Board of Directors, as determined by the Officer of Board Member presiding.

C. DIRECTOR
   i. Members of the Board of Directors must qualify as a General Member or Associate Member.
   ii. Directors shall have full speaking privileges at Meeting of the Board, and full voting privileges as authorized by these Bylaws and the Constitution of the Association.

D. FORFEITURE OF MEMBERSHIP

i. Any member of the Association (or coach, team or official) may be expelled and his or her membership canceled, forfeited or suspended unilaterally by the Association's Board of Directors or through its consideration of a recommendation of the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee or he or she may be ensured by the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee and/or by the Association's Board of Directors for a violation of the Association's Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations or for conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Association.

ii. If forfeiture of membership action is taken by the Board of Directors, a majority vote shall be necessary to ratify the action.

iii. The Association will honor all orders of suspension of players, coaches, or referees issued by this Association or any other Association or United States Soccer Federation (hereinafter sometimes called "USSF") Division.

iv. An annual membership is established as being from August 1 through July 31 of the following calendar year.

ARTICLE III - GOVERNMENT OF ASSOCIATION

Government of Association,

This Association shall be governed by the Board of Directors of the Association.

Affiliation with The North Texas State Soccer Association,

This Association shall be directly affiliated with, and comply with the authority of, the North Texas State Soccer Association and shall represent all its members and respective interests in and before the North Texas State Soccer Association.

Superseding Authority of NTSSA Rules,

The Association recognizes the superseding authority of the rules of the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA).

Jurisdiction

This Association shall have jurisdiction over all members, administrators, referees, coaches, assistant coaches, managers, registered players, teams, parents, and other persons affiliated with such teams. Each member will adhere to these Bylaws and Rules and Regulations and will comply with the authority of the Association. If the Association is presented with sufficient evidence that a member is not adhering to these Bylaws and Rules and Regulations, the Association will ask the Appeals and Discipline Committee to investigate the allegations and take necessary action.

Books and Records,

The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall keep minutes of all meetings.

Amendments to Bylaws,

These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed, or new Bylaws may be adopted, at any meeting of the Association by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total present membership; provided, however, that all members have been given ten (10) days written or electronic notice, including a written copy of the proposed changes. Amendments to the Bylaws may be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting in June without advance notice.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS OF ASSOCIATION

Place of Meetings,

All meetings of the Association shall be held at a time and place as shall be designated by the President. All meetings of the Association will be open to the members and the general public. Executive sessions may be called by a 2/3 approval of the Board of Directors or a committee to discuss personnel or legal matters.

Special Meetings,

Special meetings of the Association for any purpose or purposes, unless otherwise prescribed by statute or by the Articles of Incorporation or by these Bylaws, may be called by the President or by petition of 20% of the designated delegates from registered teams in good standing. Business transacted at all special meetings shall be confined to the purpose stated in the notice of the meeting. A quorum is not required for this meeting so long as notices of such meetings were properly given.

Board of Directors Meetings,

The regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held once per month at a time and place as determined by the President.

A quorum as defined as one-half of the total voting membership of the Board of Directors is required. Once a quorum is established, all actions taking place at the meeting shall be legal regardless of the number present at the time of a vote, provided the meeting had not been previously legally adjourned. All members of the Association may attend this meeting.

The Order of Business for regular meetings shall be as follows:

A. Call to Order
B. Roll call
C. Approval of Minutes of the last meeting
D. Introduction of Guests
E. Director's Reports
F. Committee Reports
G. Unfinished Business
H. New Business
I. Announcements
J. Adjournment

The Order of Business for the Annual Meeting shall be as follows:

A. Call to Order
B. Roll call
C. Approval of Minutes of the last meeting
D. Election of Directors
E. Director's Reports
F. Committee Reports
G. Unfinished Business
H. New Business
I. Announcements
J. Adjournment

Emergency Actions,

In the case of a circumstance that requires the Board of Directors to take emergency action on matters demanding immediate attention, the Secretary shall issue a notice to all Board of Directors via electronic means within forty-eight (48) hours of the emergency meeting. The requirement for a quorum may be suspended. However, a minimum of five (5) members must be present, including two members of the Executive Board. The Secretary shall issue a memorandum on any action taken at the emergency meeting to all Board of Directors within five days of the meeting. At the next regularly scheduled

meeting, the action(s) taken during the emergency meeting shall be ratified by a vote of approval of two-thirds of the Directors present at the meeting.

Notice of Meetings,

Notice stating the place, day and hour, of a meeting, and the purpose or purposes for which the meeting was called, shall be delivered not less than seven days before the meetings, either personally, by electronic means, or by mail, to each delegate or Board Member of record entitled to vote at the meeting unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail addressed to the delegate or Board Member at their address as it appears on the records of the Association, with postage thereon prepaid.

Rules for Conduct,

The Board of Directors shall adopt rules for conducting business of the Association. Parliamentary procedure, as specified by Robert's Rules of Order, revised, or simplified or modified version thereof as may be approved by the Board of Directors shall govern all meetings of the Association.

Proxy,

There shall be no vote by proxy for any meetings.

ARTICLE V - NOTICE

Manner of Giving Notice,

Whenever, under the provisions of applicable statutes, the Constitution or these Bylaws, notice is required to be given to any delegate or Board Member of the Association and no provisions are made as to how such notice shall be given, it shall be construed to mean personal notice and shall be given in writing, by mail, postage paid, addressed to such delegate or Board Member at the address appearing on the records of the Association. Any notice required or permitted to be given by mail shall be deemed given at the time when the same is thus deposited in the United States mail as aforesaid. Electronic Notification is an acceptable means of notification and is determined to be submitted on the date and time such notification was sent.

Waiver of Notice,

Whenever any notice is required to be given to any delegates or Board Members of the Association under the provisions of applicable statutes, the Constitution or these Bylaws, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated in such notice, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Attendance at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a person attends for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business on the ground that the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.

ARTICLE VI - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Directors,

The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by its Board of Directors, which shall consist of the Directors of this Association, each of whom will be entitled to one vote (the Past President is not a voting member). The Board of Directors shall transact all business of the Association and shall have the power to enforce the Laws of the Games, Rules of the NTSSA, the USSF and its respective divisions, and the Constitution, Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of this Association. The Board of Directors shall also hear appeals of decisions of their Appeals & Discipline Committee.

Election of Board of Directors,

The Directors, i.e., the members of the Board, shall be elected for a term as defined in ARTICLE SIX of the Constitution. To be eligible, the members of the Board of Directors must reside within the HOT

Soccer jurisdiction and/or they are not bound by any other NTSSA member association, subject to Board approval. Should any member of the Board of Directors change residence outside said jurisdiction, the position shall be grandfathered until the end of the term of such position.

Number of Directors,

The Board of Directors shall consist of a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of sixteen(16) voting members. At least sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors will determine, by majority vote, and advise the Nominating Committee of the number of Director positions for the upcoming year.

Duties of the Board of Directors,

The powers and duties of the Board of Directors shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

A. Enforce the Constitution, Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of this Association.
B. Establish and amend, as necessary, the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of this Association.
C. Make all decisions regarding corporate operations, policies, and procedures.
D. Act as a Final Appeals Committee, when required.
E. Elect the Executive Board as outlined in these Bylaws.
F. Veto, if deemed appropriate, by a two-thirds majority, any decision by a committee or Director.
G. Resolve questions and controversies not otherwise addressed by or adjustable under the Bylaws and other Rules and Regulations of this Association.
H. Establish Special Board Positions, nonvoting, as needed.
I. Approve the Annual Budget.
J. Approve all fees to be imposed upon players and/or coaches.
K. Approve a fee structure for field usage.
L. Approve any expenditures not allocated within the Annual Budget.
M. Approve the location of all bank accounts.
N. Approve the Playing Calendar for each season.
O. Approve all fundraising activities.
P. Approve all Public Relation Campaigns.
Q. Approve all Player Recruitment Campaigns.
R. Approve the Player Refund Policy.
S. Approve the Player Scholarship Policy.
T. Approve the hiring of all Administrative Personnel.
U. Approve the Referee Assignor Contract.
V. Approve the Referee Pay Scale.
W. Approve the selection of uniform suppliers and company for printing of sponsors information.
X. Approve the company selected for taking of individual and team pictures.
Y. Approve the selection of trophy suppliers for league trophies.
Z. Approve all Coach and Referee clinics, including dates of said clinics and fees charged to participants.
AA. Approve the forfeiture of membership in this Association as outlined in Article II(D) of these Bylaws.

Annual Election,

The election of Directors shall take place at the Annual Meeting, as follows:

A. The time and place of the Annual Meeting will be set by the President.
B. Notification of the Annual meeting and a list of all Candidates for Election to the Board of Directors will be submitted by written, or electronic means, to the full voting membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.
C. The full voting membership is defined as the current members of the Board of Directors with voting privileges and each Head Coach of a duly registered recreational team.

D. Additional names of candidates for the Board of Directors may be nominated by a petition of ten percent (10%) of the full voting membership. Such a petition shall be filed with the Nomination Committee within ten days after notice of the Annual meeting has been issued to the full voting membership.
E. A voting member shall be entitled to one (1) vote, and must be present to cast their vote. There will be no voting by mail, or by written proxy. No person shall cast more than one (1) vote at the Annual Election.
F. The election of the Directors shall be by private ballot with all nominees listed in alphabetical order on the ballot.
G. There shall be no more than one (1) vote per candidate as to each ballot, and no more votes per ballot than the number of Director positions designated for the upcoming year. If there are less number of votes per ballot than the number of Director positions available, the ballot shall be deemed valid. If there are a greater number of votes per ballot than the number of Director positions available, then the ballot shall be deemed invalid and shall be destroyed prior to tabulation of votes.
H. Those candidates receiving a plurality of votes shall be declared elected.
I. The Annual Election will be initiated upon announcement by the Head of the Nomination Committee at the point in the agenda when the floor is given to said individual. The length of voting shall be one (1) hour from the announcement. Time shall be kept by the Secretary of this Association. Upon notification of the time limit, the Head of the Nomination Committee shall declare a Cessation to Voting. All ballots shall be reminded into the possession of the Head of the Nomination Committee. The number of ballots shall be made official and entered into the Minutes for verification purposes.
J. Within seven (7) days of the Annual Election, the entire Nomination Committee shall convene to process the ballots. If there exists a tie between two (2) or more candidates for the last available position, the Head of the Nomination Committee shall inform the Executive Committee. A vote to break the tie shall by cast by the Executive Board by private ballot and delivered to the Head of the Nomination Committee. A list of all newly elected Directors shall be submitted to the Executive Committee at the conclusion of the meeting.
K. Within ten (10) days of the Annual Election all newly elected Directors shall be notified via written or electronic means by the Head of the Nomination Committee. Notification will include a questionnaire with available positions within the association and a listing of standing committees. The newly elected Director shall respond within five (5) days of their preference of positions and desire to serve on any committees. Preference is not a guarantee.
L. At the July meeting of the Board of Directors the Head of the Nomination Committee shall present to the newly elected Board of Directors a roll call vote for positions on the Executive Committee. All other positions on the Board of Directors will be issued to the newly elected Directors. A motion will be made to destroy all of the ballots at the conclusion of the meeting.

Resignation,

Any Director, committee member, officer or agent may resign by giving written notice or notification by electronic means to the President. The resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, or immediately if no time is specified. Unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Removal,

Any member of the Board of Directors shall be required to resign following a vote of "no confidence" in their ability to remain in office. Twenty percent (20%) of the voting members of the Board of Directors may petition and sign a written statement requesting such a vote. The petition will be required to detail

allegations of conduct which is grossly negligent, severely improper, or otherwise irregular and detrimental to the well-being of HOT Soccer. The petition must be submitted in writing to the Appeals and Discipline Director, which will review the petition within fifteen (15) days of receipt of such petition. If the petition is deemed acceptable, the Appeals and Discipline Director shall inform the Secretary for inclusion of the vote on the next meeting agenda. The vote of "no confidence" must be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all the Board of Directors. If an officer receives this vote of "no confidence", he/she is automatically suspended from the Board.

Attendance at Meetings,

A Board of Director member not attending three (3) consecutive, or a total of five (5) scheduled meetings, including regular meetings, of this Association or Executive Committee meetings will have his/her office declared vacant unless such absences are excused by the Executive Board. A vote of "no confidence" by the Board of Directors shall be taken upon the first board meeting following the third consecutive absence, or fifth total absence. Should the vote of "no confidence" pass, his/her office shall then be filled by an appointment until the next Annual Meeting. The Secretary of the Association shall notify a member and copy the Executive Board when said member is within one meeting for meeting the criteria for vacancy due to absenteeism.

Vacancies,

In the event that a Director is removed based upon a vote of "no confidence", or by resignation, the vacancy will be filled by appointment by the President. The appointee shall serve until the next HOTSA Annual General Meeting.

If a Board position is vacant due to the number of elected Board members being less than the maximum number of Board positions, the President may fill the vacancy by appointment.

In cases where the President fills a vacancy of the Board of Directors by appointment, at the next meeting of the Board of Directors, the newly appointed Board Member shall be ratified by a two- thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present. If the ratification fails, the Appointee shall forfeit all rights as a Board Member and the position shall be declared vacant.

If the vacancy affects a member of the Executive Committee, excluding the Treasurer, the position shall be filled in accordance with the power and duties of Executive Committee members as outlined in these Bylaws. If the vacancy affects the office of Treasurer, the members of the Rules, Regulation, Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall meet within seven (7) days to develop a list of potential candidates for the vacancy. The Chairman of this Committee shall conduct a roll call vote at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Compensation,

The Board of Directors shall serve without salary for their services. Any Board of Director member may be reimbursed for expenses approved by the budget and/or the Board of Directors.

Minutes,

The Board of Directors shall keep regular minutes of its proceedings. The minutes shall be provided in a manner so that all members in the Association shall have access to the Official Minutes. Approval of minutes for the preceding meeting shall be acquired at each meeting.

Grievance Involving Board of Directors Members,

A member of the Board of Directors can be a member or official of a team, or club. In the event of any grievance involving such an organization, they may not act on its behalf nor be entitled to vote on the grievance.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

Conflicts of Interest,

A member of the Board of Directors can be a member or official of a team, or club.

a) *Soccer Conflict of Interest*: Any member of the Board, a Standing Committee, or any other committee of the Association shall abstain from discussion of and voting upon any subject matter being considered by the respective body if such would constitute a conflict of interest, directly or indirectly, with any individual, player, coach, manager, official, referee, parent, or team, including, without limitation, those conflicts of interest related to hearing protests or appeals related to the member's team, club players or coach, or parents or managers involved with the member's team or club.

b) *Other Conflicts of Interest*: It is the policy of the Association that no member of the Board, a Standing Committee, or any other committee or any officer or any employee of the Association shall have any association with or interest in any business enterprise which would conflict with the proper performance of his duties or responsibilities as such or which might tend to affect his independence or judgment with respect to transactions between the Association and any such business enterprise.

It is also the policy of the Association that no member of the Board or any committee or any officer or employee of the Association shall have, directly or indirectly, any material personal business or financial interest with, or in any business enterprise with which, the Association does business, including, without limitation, the member, or any person in the immediate family of the member, holding a position with a supplier of goods and/or services to the Association, unless the material facts of the relationship or the interest in the business are disclosed to the Board and the Board in good faith authorizes the contract, of the disinterested Directors. If a member of the Board, rather than a member of a committee, is the person making the disclosure, the interested Director may be counted in determining the presence of a quorum at a meeting of the Board, whereas the disinterested Directors consider whether to authorize the contract, transaction, or relationship.

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES AND AGENTS: Powers and Duties

President

The following powers and duties are inherent to the President of the Association:

A. Determine the time and place for all HOT Soccer meetings.
B. Preside at all HOT Soccer meetings.
C. Preside at all Executive Committee meetings.
D. Serve as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.
E. Represent HOT Soccer.
F. Authorization to sign checks on behalf of Heart of Texas Soccer.
G. Supervise the Registrar.
H. Supervise any office personnel, including the hiring of said office personnel.
I. Ensure that all policies of the Board are being carried out.
J. Appoint all Service Committees.
K. May appoint delegates to represent the best interests of HOT Soccer at any necessary meetings.
L. Cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie at any meeting, or may waive the right to do so.
M. Submit an Annual Report in writing at the Annual meeting and said report shall become part of the minutes of such meeting.
N. Empowered to take prudent and reasonable action in cases not covered in these Bylaws, and such authority is implicit in the office.

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Vice President

The Vice President shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties and shall succeed the office of President in the event of absence or vacancy, with majority approval of the Board of Directors. In the instance that the Vice President cannot or does not desire to succeed to the office of President, the position may then be filled by an appointment approved by the majority of the Board until the next Annual Meeting.

The following powers and duties are inherent to the Vice President:

A. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee.
B. Authorization to sign checks on behalf of Heart of Texas Soccer.
C. Supervise the work of Age Group Commissioners.
D. Supervise Team Formation.
E. Approve, in writing, player transfers where required by the Playing Rules of the Association.
F. He/she shall be responsible for arbitration of issues/infractions involving coaches, assistant coaches, managers, registered players, team representatives and/or teams within his/her jurisdiction. Problems of a more serious nature shall be reported to the A & D Committee

Secretary

The Secretary shall succeed to the office of Vice President in the event of absence or vacancy, with the majority approval of the Board of Directors. In the instance that the Secretary cannot or does not desire to succeed to the office of Vice President, the position may then be filled by an appointment approved by the majority of the Board until the next Annual Meeting

The following powers and duties are inherent to the Secretary:

A. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee.
B. Keep minutes of all Board of Director meetings.
C. Keep on file, all Committee reports.
D. Take roll at all Board of Director meetings.
E. Provide minutes to all Board of Directors within fourteen (14) days of the meeting.
F. Upon approval of minutes at Board meetings, make necessary revisions and keep all approved minutes in a book and have said book available for review by all Board of Directors and Association members.
G. Notify all members of the Association of results of elections and/or appointments.
H. Furnish Directors with documents that are required for the performance of their duties.
I. Serve as a signatory for official acts of HOT Soccer.
J. Notify the voting membership of the Association of the Annual Election.
K. Provide required notice of special meetings.
L. Conduct general correspondence on behalf of HOT Soccer.
M. Prepare the agenda for all Board of Director meetings and submit to all Directors a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

Treasurer,

The Treasurer shall succeed to the office of Secretary in the event of absence or vacancy, with the majority approval of the Board of Directors. In the instance that the Treasurer cannot or does not desire to succeed to the office of Secretary, the position may then be filled by an appointment approved by the majority of the Board until the next Annual Meeting

The following powers and duties are inherent to the Treasurer:

A. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

B. Serve as the financial officer of the Association and shall be responsible for coordinating budget appropriations, complete financial reconciliation and reporting in writing, prior to each scheduled Board of Directors meeting, a balance sheet and income statement.
C. Assume responsibility for all bank accounts of the Association.
D. Authorization to sign checks on behalf of Heart of Texas Soccer.
E. Adhere to all financial policies and procedures of HOT Soccer. These policies shall include, but not be limited to, requirement of two signatures of authorized members for any checks over $500. The two signatures required cannot be from people who are related. The person or persons receiving the check may not be either of the authorized signature(s), or related to the authorized signature(s) on the check.
F. Present a budget for the following fiscal year for approval of the Board of Directors.
G. Present an Annual Report on the Financial Status of HOT Soccer to the membership of the Association.
H. Serve as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Age Group Commissioner,

All Age Group Commissioners shall be appointed by the Selection Committee and ratified each year. Age Group Commissioners shall not be appointed to an age group in which he/she either coaches a team or has a child participating.

The following powers and duties are inherent to the Age Group Commissioner:

A. Assign players to teams in accordance with procedures outlined in Section 9 of the Recreational Division Playing Rules.
B. Compile a list of teams, including the Head Coach, any Assistant Coaches, Managers, Parent Representatives, etc. from each team within their respective age group.
C. Assign uniform colors.
D. Actively recruit coaches when needed and provide coaches with necessary information for obtaining their necessary coaching license.
E. Maintain open and frequent communication with coaches within their age group.
F. Shall be responsible for the matters within their Age Group.
G. Approve, in writing, players transfers where required by the Playing Rules of the Association.
H. Flight all recreational league games and present flighting to the Director of Scheduling.
I. Approve, in writing, all rescheduling of games and present to the Director of Scheduling.
J. Observe each team during league playing dates a minimum of two (2) times during each playing season.
K. Notify the Vice President of any potential problems.

Appeals and Discipline Director,

The following powers and duties are inherent to the Appeals and Discipline Director:

A. Assemble an independent panel to serve during necessary hearings. The members of this panel and the Appeals and Discipline Director will define the Appeals and Discipline Committee.
B. Make a determination if a hearing is warranted and follow procedures outlined in APPENDIX A.
C. Schedule Appeals Hearings.
D. Schedule Disciplinary Hearings.
E. Schedule Game Protest hearings.
F. Maintain a record of all Disciplinary Actions on teams and individuals.
G. Administer punishments as determined by the Appeals and Discipline Committee.
H. Provide records of actions to NTSSA, as requested.
I. Submit a semi-annual report to the Board of Directors.
J. Submit an Annual Report to the membership of Heart of Texas Soccer.
K. Serve on the Rules, Regulation, Constitution and Bylaw Committee.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

Director of Fundraising,

The Director of Fundraising has the following powers and duties:

A. Chairman of the Fundraising Committee.
B. Coordinate all concession stand activity
C. Present fund raising programs to the Board of Directors for Approval and Implementation.
D. Serve as the Point of Contact for approved fund raising programs.
E. Solicit corporations and other business entities for large contributions.
F. Actively seek out and apply for grants which can benefit Heart of Texas Soccer.
G. Submit a semi-annual report to the Board of Directors outlining all fund raising programs.
H. Submit an annual report to the membership of Heart of Texas Soccer.
I. Member of the Long Term Planning Committee.
J. Member of the Scholarship Committee.

Past President,

He/she shall be an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Board of Directors and shall serve as an advisor to the President and serve a two-year term on the Board of Directors on the expiration of the individual's term as President.

Parliamentarian,

The Past President shall act as Parliamentarian, using "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised" as a guide. In the absence of the Past-President, any other voting member of the Board of Directors can act as Parliamentarian.

Referee Liaison,

The Referee Liaison shall be a registered USSF Referee and shall be solicited from Central Texas Soccer Referee Association. The following powers and duties are inherited to the Referee Liaison:

A. Promote professionalism and integrity for all USSF referees.
B. Report violations of the Code of Ethics for all USSF referees.
C. Solicit approval from the Board of Directors for all referee clinics to be held by Heart of Texas Soccer throughout the playing year.
D. Submit necessary paperwork to NTSSA for approval to conduct one Grade Nine level referee clinic per playing season.
E. Submit necessary paperwork to NTSSA for approval to conduct at least one Grade Eight level referee clinic per playing year.
F. Coordinate any required meeting spaces for referee clinics.
G. Recommend a qualified Referee Assignor to the Board for approval.
H. Attend the meetings of Central Texas Soccer Referee Association,
I. If the Board desires a referee to be reassigned or not allowed to referee games at Heart of Texas Soccer, the Referee Liaison will notify the Referee Assignor and CTSRA within seven days.
J. Submit an annual report of the membership of Heart of Texas Soccer.
K. Serve on the Rules, Regulation, Constitution and Bylaw Committee.

Registrar,

The Registrar of the Association shall be the chief administrative staff person of the Association and, subject to the supervision of the Board, shall report directly to the President and shall perform such duties as may be incident to their office or specifically delegated to them by the Board. The Registrar shall be selected by and serve at the pleasure of the Board and receive such compensation and other emoluments as the Board may from time to time determine. The Registrar shall be an at-will employee of the Association and may be terminated at any time by the Board in its sole discretion. The Registrar of the Association shall be responsible for the registration and eligibility of all players and teams within the jurisdiction of the Association. The registrar shall not have any voting privileges.

Referee Assignor,

The position of Referee Assignor will report directly to the Referee Liaison. The Referee Assignor will be responsible for scheduling referees for league and tournament play and that the assigned referee or a qualified replacement officiate the game. The Referee Assignor shall not have any voting privileges.

Volunteer.
A Heart of Texas Soccer Volunteer is a person who seeks to improve the Operation, Visibility, Monitor Playing Conditions, or any other item deemed beneficial to Heart of Texas Soccer. Volunteers shall not have voting privileges or be required to attend meetings of the Board of Directors. Volunteers shall be appointed by the President, and ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present at the next monthly meeting of the Board of Directors. Volunteers shall be empowered to act on behalf of Heart of Texas Soccer as identified in their assignments dictated by the Executive Board. There shall be a maximum of six (6) Volunteer positions.

Employees/Staff.
The Executive Committee shall be authorized to employ such employee's, as it deems necessary to carry out the day-to-day functions of the Heart of Texas Soccer Association. Employees shall not have any voting roles in any business of the Heart of Texas Soccer Association. The term of employment for all employees shall be at the will of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VIII - STANDING COMMITTEES

The following Standing Committees shall be appointed by the President at the first Board Meeting following the Annual General Meeting of each year. Vacancies on such committees shall be filled by appointment, within thirty (30) days of occurrence of such vacancy. In case of an emergency, the Committee Chairperson shall have the power to fill vacancies of any Committee by appointment until such vacancy can be filled in accordance with normal procedures. All committee meetings/hearings are open to the general or associate membership.

Executive Committee,
It shall be composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, with the President as the Chairperson. Members of the Executive Committee shall not hold any other voting office within the structure of Heart of Texas Soccer Association. The Executive Committee shall convene once per month in addition to regular meetings of the Board of Directors.

To be eligible for a position on the Executive Committee, the Board Member must have served previously on the Board for a minimum of two consecutive soccer seasons and the soccer season prior to the Election of Officers for the upcoming fiscal year.

The Election of the Executive Committee shall follow the following procedure:

A. At the July Meeting of the newly appointed Board of Directors, the Head of the Nomination Committee shall present to the Board of Directors a list of candidates for positions on the Executive Committee.
B. Additional nominations may be taken from the floor prior to voting for the Executive Committee positions. Nominations will be accepted upon a motion and a second.
C. Voting shall proceed in the following order: President, Vice President. Secretary, and Treasurer.
D. All voting will be done by private ballot and will be tallied and reported by the Head of the Nomination Committee prior to proceeding to the next office.

Appeals and Disciplinary Committee,
It shall be composed of the A&D Director and a minimum of four additional members, of which three shall constitute a quorum. The additional members of the Appeals and Discipline Committee shall not be a member of the Board of Directors. The Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall hear and pass judgment upon any issues judged as necessary by the Appeals and Discipline Director in accordance with Article IX. Heart of Texas Soccer shall solicit from Central Texas Soccer Referee Association, a referee who will serve as an advisor to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee.

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Rules, Regulation, Constitution and Bylaw Committee,
It shall be composed of the Vice President as Chairperson with four (4) members. It shall be responsible for reviewing the Association's Rules and Regulations and the Constitution and Bylaws and proposing changes as required to such rules. All proposed rules shall be presented to the membership for 2/3 approval of membership present.

The Committee shall maintain a list of rules and regulations enacted by the NTSSA and shall provide all coaches and or managers with a copy of the Heart of Texas Rules and Regulations and Constitution and Bylaws.

Budget and Finance Committee,
It shall be composed of the Treasurer as Chairperson, the President and two (2) members. It shall submit a proposed budget for the Association for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board of Directors two (2) months prior to the Annual General Meeting. It shall report the status of the budget to the Members at the Board of Directors Meetings.

An audit shall be conducted the lesser of four years or changing of the Treasurer. The audit shall be conducted by an agency appointed by the Board of Directors. The agency shall be instructed to make any recommendations to improve the Association record keeping processes.

Nomination Committee,
It shall be the duty of the Nomination Committee to nominate and present to the Board at least one member for each open position and to determine that the individuals nominated are agreeable to the placing of their names in nomination and will accept office if elected. The Committee shall prepare written ballots to be used with such elections.

Long Term Planning Committee,
It shall be composed of the five (5) Board of Directors. It shall submit an outline for long term goals of Heart of Texas Soccer to the Board of Directors for approval on a yearly basis. A status report shall be submitted to the Board of Directors every three (3) months. The Chairperson of the Long-Term Planning Committee shall submit an Annual Report to the General membership.

Fundraising Committee,
It shall be composed of the Director of Fundraising and two (2) Board of Directors. It shall convene to determine fundraising efforts and goals as outlined by the Budget and Finance Committee. The committee shall meet to determine procedures for submission of fundraising information and collection of funds. The Committee shall submit a report at meetings of the Board of Directors. The Committee shall submit and Annual Report to the general membership of Heart of Texas Soccer.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

ARTICLE IX - RULES, REGULATIONS, PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL

Procedure for Filing Appeals,

In no event shall any person or persons or organizations under the jurisdiction of this Association resort to the Courts until all appeal procedures have been exhausted. For violations to this rule, the offending party shall be subject to the sanctions of suspension and fines as set forth by the United States Soccer Federation, and shall be liable for all expenses incurred by the Heart of Texas Soccer Association and its officers and members in defending each court action, including but not limited to court costs, attorney fees, reasonable compensation for time spent by the Heart of Texas Soccer Association officers and members in responding to and defending against allegations in the actions, including responses to discovery and court appearances, travel expenses, and the expenses for holding special meetings necessitated by the Court action. All decisions at all levels of the appeal process shall stand and be of full force and effect until changed by a higher authority.

IX.a) Levels of Appeals.

Any appeals, except otherwise provided in Article IX.f) for Game Protest, or as otherwise provided by the Rules, Regulations and Bylaws of NTSSA shall proceed through the following levels, in the order stated:

IX.a.i) Age Group Commissioner
IX.a.ii) Vice President, Heart of Texas Soccer Association
IX.a.iii) Heart of Texas Soccer Association Appeals and Discipline Committee
IX.a.iv) Heart of Texas Soccer Board of Directors
IX.a.v) NTSSA Appeals and Discipline Committee
IX.a.vi) NTSSA Executive Committee
IX.a.vii) USYSA Region III Appeals Commissioner
IX.a.viii) USYSA National Appeals Committee
IX.a.ix) USSF National Appeals Committee
IX.a.x) USSF National Council

IX.b) Appeal to Age Group Commission

IX.b.i) There shall be no formal hearing at this level. A written complaint, by physical or electronic means, shall be submitted to the Age Group Commissioner for action.

IX.b.ii) Written statements or affidavits are not required of the Age Group Commission unless otherwise stated in the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of this Association.

IX.b.iii) The Age Group Commissioner shall represent the first level of the appeals process. Any appeals within a Division must first be submitted in writing to the appropriate Age Group Commissioner for resolution.

IX.c) Appeal to Vice President, Heart of Texas Soccer Association

IX.c.i) If the decision of the Age Group Commissioner is not satisfactory to the appealing party, the appealing party shall notify the Vice President in writing, by physical or electronic means, within five (5) days of the appealed decision.

IX.c.ii) There will be no formal hearing at this level.

IX.c.iii) The Vice President shall represent the secondary level of the appeals process.

IX.d) Appeal to Heart of Texas Association Appeals and Discipline Committee

IX.d.i) If the decision of the Vice President is not satisfactory to the appealing party, the appealing party shall notify the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee in writing, physical or electronic means, within five (5) days of the appeal decision. All appeals shall be accompanied by a $50.00 fee (cash or cashier's check). If the appeal is upheld by the Committee, the fee will be returned. If it is denied, the fee will be forfeited to the Treasury of this Association.

IX.d.ii) This Committee, at its discretion, may, when requested in writing to do so, waive the time limit for filing appeals but in no case shall an extension of more than five (5) days be granted.

IX.d.iii) All appeals to this Committee must be made in writing to the Chairman of the Committee. In cases of controversy as to timely receipt of appeals, the postmark date (postage meter not acceptable) will govern.

IX.d.iv) Upon receipt of appeal, properly submitted, the Chairman of this Committee shall set a time and place for the hearing and will advise all appropriate parties three (3) days' notice of the hearing. Such hearing settings are solely the responsibility of the Committee, but all such hearings must be scheduled within five (5) days of receipt of the appeal and the appealing party is bound to present all information and evidence relative to the appeal at the hearing.

IX.d.v) All hearings of the Appeals and Discipline Committee shall conform to the latest NTSSA guidelines and specifically conform to Rule 3.11, NTSSA Bylaws.

IX.d.vi) The appealing party is entitled to be present at any hearing, and shall present all pertinent information, evidence, and argument relative to the appeal at the hearing. Any party as to which the appealing party complains shall also be entitled to present information, evidence and argument. The Chairman of this Committee shall determine, and announce, at the commencement of the hearing, the amount of time provided to all parties for their presentation. The Chairman and Members of this Committee shall be entitled to question any party at the hearing. The duration and conduct of the hearing shall in all respects be determined by the Chairman or presiding member of the Appeals and Discipline Committee, in accordance with the Rules, Regulations, and Bylaws of NTSSA.

IX.d.vii) No recording devices of any sort are allowed at a hearing unless authorized by the Appeals and Disciple Director.

IX.d.viii) No court report or stenographer shall attend a hearing for the purpose of transcribing the proceedings unless authorized by the Appeals and Discipline Director.

IX.d.ix) Parties at the hearing are not authorized to appear with an attorney, and the Appeals and Discipline Director shall be authorized to exclude from the hearing, anyone representing or purporting to represent a party in that capacity.

IX.d.x) The Appeals and Discipline Committee shall within five days of the hearing, notify all parties in writing, by physical or electronic means, as to its decision. A copy of the decision shall be delivered to the Secretary of this Association.

IX.e) Appeal to Board of Directors, Heart of Texas Soccer Association

IX.e.i) If the decision of the Appeals and Discipline Committee is not satisfactory to the appealing party, the appealing party shall notify the President of this Association in writing, by physical or electronic means, within five (5) days of the appealed decision. All appeals shall be accompanied by a $50.00 fee (cash or cashier's check). If the appeal is upheld by the Committee, the fee will be returned. If it is denied, the fee will be forfeited to the Treasury of this Association.

IX.e.ii) The procedure for appeal to the Board of Directors shall be the same as the procedure outlined in Section IX. d). of these Bylaws.

IX.e.iii) Decisions of the Board of Directors shall be appealed in accordance with applicable NTSSA Rules, Regulations, and Bylaws.

IX.f) Game Protest

IX.f.i) A coach shall be required to file a written protest within forty-eight (48) hours of the conclusion of any game being protested, and shall submit a written notice to the appropriate Age Group Commissioner. The protest shall include a brief summary of all points to be considered, along with the appropriate fee:

- Regular Season Games and Playoffs $25
- Championship and Tournament Games $100

IX.f.ii) The Age Group[Commissioner shall evaluate the protest and shall forward it to the Appeals and Discipline Committee for review and action if the Commissioner feels the basis for the protest is consistent with Section 3.13 of the NTSSA Bylaws.

IX.f.iii) The Appeals and discipline Committee, upon receipt of any such protest shall schedule a hearing within five (5) days.

IX.g) Assault or Abuse of Officials or Referees

Because NTSSA has exclusive jurisdiction with regard to assault or abuse of officials, to include referees and linesmen, such matters shall be referred directly to NTSSA, and shall not be within the jurisdiction of the Heart of Texas Soccer Association Appeals and Discipline Committee.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

RECREATIONAL DIVISION PLAYING RULES

GENERAL RULES

1. **SOCCER YEAR AND AGE REQUIREMENTS**

The soccer year shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30 of the following year.

2. **PLAYING SEASON**

Fall:	July1 through and no later than December 31.
Spring:	January 1 through and no later than June 30.

3. **LEAGUES**

The Heart of Texas Soccer Association Recreational League will be divided into eight (8) age levels (Under-4, Under-6, Under-8, Under-10, Under-12, Under-14, Under-16 and Under-19), referred to as leagues. Both boys and girls leagues shall be formed in each age group. Eligibility for each league will be based upon NTSSA age requirements.

4. **AGE CONFERENCES AND GROUPS**

The Heart of Texas Soccer Association leagues may be divided into age conferences (i.e. Under-8 will be divided into Under-7 and Under-8), as deemed necessary by the Age Group Commissioner of said league for playing purposes.

5. **LEAGUE STANDINGS**

5.1. The following point system is used to determine standings:

5.1.1. Under-4 through Under-8 will be noncompetitive and no Scores or Standings will be kept.

5.1.2. Points will be awarded for Under-10 through Under-19, as follows:

5.1.2.1. 3 points for a win

5.1.2.2. 1 points for a tie

5.1.2.3. 0 points for a loss

5.2.1.4. A forfeit game will be scored at a 3-0 win in favor of the non-forfeiting team. The winning team receives 3 points for the standings.

5.2. If two or more teams are tied in points after their regular seasons games are completed, the following tiebreaker procedures will be used to determine the team standings:

5.2.1. Head-to-Head game results.
5.2.2. Winner of most games
5.2.3. Fewest goals allowed
5.2.4. Most shutouts
5.2.5. Fewest Yellow/Red Cards
5.2.6. IFAB Kicks from the Penalty Mark
5.2.6.1. Each team will take five alternating kicks. The team with the most goals after the five kicks will advance. If they are still tied, then alternating kicks will be taken one-on-one until one team outscores the other after each team has taken an equal number of shots. All players on each team, including the goal keepers must shoot once before any player can shoot twice.

6. **AWARDS**

A participation award (to be determined by the HOTSA Board of Directors) will be presented to all players in all leagues for each soccer playing season.

7. **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

7.1. All players must have paid the necessary Association fees or received a scholarship prior to the first game.

7.2. All players must have provided proof of Birth to the Association Registrar for validation prior to the first game.

7.3. For the purpose of league play, only players who are rostered to a team may participate in the league play and no guest players will be allowed on the team.

7.4. Teams residing outside the Association boundaries that are approved for participation in the Association's program shall be required to submit a valid roster, signed by the team's home association and pay any applicable fees before they will be scheduled for any games.

7.5. Association Fees
7.5.1. Registration Fees and due date as established by the Association Board of Directors are due for each player requesting to participate in the Program.
7.5.2. Late Fees will be established by the Association Board of Directors for any registration applications received after the end of regular registration date as established by the Association Board of Directors.
7.5.3. Any applications received after the end of registration date as determined by the Association Board of Directors will be assigned to the "Wait List".

8. **REFUNDS**

8.1. Refund Policy

Only players for whom the Association cannot provide a team, on which a child can play, will be refunded registration and late fees with the exception of any online transaction fee. Otherwise the following guidelines will apply:

8.1.1. No refunds will be given to a player after he/she has participated in a team practice

and/or any games.

8.1.2. All refunds will be minus an administrative processing fee approved by the Board of Directors.

8.1.3. Late fees are not refundable.

8.1.4. Online transaction fees are never refundable.

8.1.5. Refund requests received after rosters are released will be evaluated on a “case by case” basis. The evaluation may result in a full refund, partial refund, or denial.

8.2. Procedure for Requesting and Paying Refunds

8.2.1. All requests for refunds must be received in writing by the Heart of Texas Soccer Association one week prior to opening day of the season the refund request is being submitted for.

8.2.2. All requests for refunds must be initiated by the parent or player in writing to the HOT office, using the Refund Request form.

9. **TEAM FORMATION**

9.1. AGE GROUPS

9.1.1. Players will be assigned to their appropriate age group based upon the age of the player in accordance with North Texas Soccer Association rules and best practices. Players are assigned to the same age group for the Fall and Spring Season within a soccer year.

9.1.2. A player may "play up" in an older age group with the written and/or documented request from the parent. The following procedure and limitations shall apply to a player who wishes to transfer to an older age group:

- Written and/or documented permission from the player's parents/guardians requesting to "play up” or transfer to an older age group.
- The parent must request the transfer at the time of registration.
- The transfer request will be reviewed by the player’s current age group commissioner and the commissioner of the age group to which that player will participate.
- Written and/or documented approval of the Age Group Commissioner for the age group of which the player was originally assigned
- Written and/or documented approval of the Age Group Commissioner for the age group in which the player desires to play
- Written and/or documented approval of the Vice-President
- Once a player is rostered to a team, the parent may not request a transfer to an older age group.
- The player may transfer to an age group only one year above his playing age, unless the player is requesting to play on the same team as a sibling.
- If the transfer to an older age group is accepted, the player will be placed in the player pool and placed on a team in accordance with Rule 9.2.5. A parent may not request a specific team or coach, unless the request involves a sibling.

- Players participating in U4-U6 age divisions are not permitted to transfer to older age groups unless they are requesting to play with a sibling.
- A request to transfer to an older age group may be denied if there are no openings in the age group for the player.
- A request to transfer to an older age group may be denied if that player's transfer would result in the dissolution of the team to which that player is currently rostered.
- A player requesting to "play up" more than one year must be evaluated by the Director of Coaching. Written and/or documented approval from the Director of Coaching is required.

9.1.3. Players who have requested to "play up" and have been approved will remain rostered to the older team in subsequent seasons unless the parent requests a Player Transfer in accordance with Rule 9.2.5. A parent may request that the child return to a team in their playing age at the time of registration if the parent so chooses. Such a request will be honored and the player will be assigned in accordance with Rule 9.2.3.

9.1.4. No player may play in a lower age group. In the event of special circumstances such as mental or physical limitations of the player, an exception will require the following:

- Written permission from the player's parents/guardians requesting to "play down" and explanation of special circumstances. The player's parents/guardians are required to submit written documentation from a physical, licensed to practice in the State of Texas, describing the mental or physical limitations.
- Written approval of the Age Group Commissioner for the age group of which the player was originally assigned
- Written approval of the Age Group Commissioner for the age group in which the player desires to play
- Written approval of the Vice-President
- Approval from the Heart of Texas Board of Directors

9.1.5. There will be no co-ed play. An exception may be granted for a team that is formed in an area greater than thirty miles outside the Greater Waco Area. The Exception will need to be requested in writing by the Age Group Commissioner(s) and approved in writing by the Vice-President.

9.1.6. In an instance where player movement between age groups will affect/disqualify the team on which the player is placed from competition in tournaments or from Tournament of Champions, the coach of the receiving team must give written permission to such an agreement.

9.1.7. The Association Registrar shall not move a player to another age group until the Registrar has received all necessary approvals in writing from all appropriate parties.

9.2. TEAM FORMATIONS

9.2.1. A Team (Coaches and Players) formed by HOTSA and playing in HOTSA the previous season, may remain as a unit provided they meet the league eligibility and age requirements.

9.2.2. Returning players are placed on the team they were rostered on in the immediate past playing season unless there is a request to change or transfer.

9.2.3. New recreational teams and recreational teams needing additional players will have players rostered to their team from the Player's Pool in accordance with the following priority:

1. Public School the player is zoned to attend according to home address on record.
2. Public School District the player is zoned to attend according to home address on record.
3. City of home address.
4. Zip Code of home address.

9.2.4. In an effort to promote participation in recreational soccer and HOTSA, returning players may extend an invitation to a friend of the same age division within the HOTSA to join his/her existing team, if it is the friend's first time playing soccer. Such requests should be made in writing at the time of registration by both the returning player and the participant receiving the invitation to join.

9.2.4.1. Invitations to join an existing team may only be made to new players. New players are defined as having no prior record of registration with Heart of Texas Soccer Association and having no record of registration with another member organization within the previous calendar year.

9.2.4.2. All requests will be reviewed by the designated Age Group Commissioner.

9.2.4.3. Requests may be denied if the addition would result in returning players of the team being removed from the team roster.

9.2.4.4. Requests which would result in players being rostered outside of their age group will be denied on the basis of not aligning with the Age Groups as defined above within the Recreational Division Playing Rules.

9.2.5. New players, or players wishing a transfer from a previously rostered team, are placed in the Player's Pool and grouped and grouped according to procedure outlined in 9.2.3 & 9.2.4. Unless the player has been invited to join an existing team as outlined in 9.2.4, player requests for specific coaches or teams will be not be allowed and will be automatically denied.

9.2.6. Players who did not participate in the immediately preceding season will be returned to the Player Pool for placement in accordance with 9.2.3.

9.2.7. Any player, new or returning, who registers after the regular registration period has ended, will be assigned to the wait list for their age division, and placement on a roster is not guaranteed. Placement will depend on available roster positions of existing teams formed during the regular registration period. Returning players who register during the late registration period will lose their previously associated roster positioning, and will not be guaranteed to return to their previous team regardless of open roster positions. Transfer from the wait list to open roster spaces will be handled in chronological order according to time of registration submission.

9.2.8. Once the late registration period has closed, there will be no further additions to the wait list.

9.2.9. The maximum roster size of recreational teams are as outlined below:

Age Group	Maximum	Minimum
Under 6	6	4
Under 7	8	5
Under 8	10	6
Under 10	12	8
Under 12	16	10
Under 13	18	12
Under 14 & Older	22	12

9.2.10. A coach may **NOT** refuse a qualified player to participate with his team. If the coach feels such a situation is untenable, the coach shall provide a written statement to the Age Group Commissioner indicating the nature of the problem and making a request for player removal. The Age Group Commissioner shall conduct an investigation into the matter and submit the findings to the Heart of Texas Board of Directors, which shall render a decision.

9.2.11. Any team registered with Heart of Texas Soccer shall not be disbanded unless any one of the following occur:

- The number of returning players drops below the following criteria:

Age Group	Minimum
Under 6	3
Under 7	4
Under 8	5
Under 10	7
Under 12	9
Under 13 & older	11

- The coach resigns from his position and an eligible successor could not be found to assume the duties of the Coach.
- Due to the actions of the team, players, or coach, Appeals and Discipline rules that the team shall be disbanded.

In cases of Team Disbandment, the players are placed into the Player's Pool and placed on a team in accordance with 9.2.3. The Age Group Commissioner shall try to keep a minimum of two players from a disbanded team together on any team in which they are rostered, however there is no guarantee players will be able to remain with their former teammates.

9.2.12. In no case shall the number of rostered players on a recreational team be greater than the size outlined in 9.2.9. In the case that there are remaining players in the Player Pool after the teams have been filled and there is not a sufficient number of players to form a team, or a Coach cannot be found, the remaining players shall be notified to submit a Refund Request in accordance with Section 8 of the General Rules.

9.2.13. All Recreational rosters will be frozen one week prior to the first game day each season. Player movement will not be allowed once rosters have been frozen.

9.2.14. Team Formation can be appealed in the following order of magnitude:
1. Age Group Commissioner
2. Vice President
3. Appeals and Discipline Committee

9.3. NON-ROSTER PLAYER

9.3.1. A player may register with Heart of Texas Soccer as a non-rostered player for a fee determined by the Board of Directors. A non-rostered player may participate in tournaments as a recreational guest player. Non-rostered players may not participate in any league games.

9.3.2. Non-rostered players are only allowed in the U7 and above age groups.

9.3.3. Non-rostered players are allowed to participate in the Academy Program, outlined by North Texas Rules and Bylaws.

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9.4. PLAYER TRANSFER

9.4.1. A returning player on a rostered team may request a transfer to change teams. The player may not request a specific team or coach. The request shall include a written statement explaining the reasons for a transfer. The transfer request may or may not be granted based upon the decision of the Age Group Commissioner. Any Player Transfer Request recommended for approval by the Age Group Commissioner must be approved in writing by the Vice President.

9.4.2. If a transfer request is submitted due to transportation reasons, the Age Group Commissioner has the right to transfer either player to either team.

9.4.3. If a transfer request seeks to increase the competitive strength, or "stack" a team, the request shall not be granted.

9.4.4. Appeal of the Transfer Request will be to the Appeals and Discipline Committee.

9.4.5. A coach may not actively solicit a player to request a transfer from his current team. This rule applies to a coach of another team as well as the coach of the team to which the player is rostered. Such actions are not in compliance with the Code of Conduct and may warrant a hearing from the Appeals and Discipline Committee.

9.4.6. If a player signs an Academy Form (applies to U7-U10 players only), that player may not request a transfer to the recreational team coached by any member of the Academy team's coaching staff.

9.4.7. A player's parent cannot be an assistant coach on another team in order that the player is transferred to that team.

10. **PLAYER RELEASE**

Players shall be released as stated in the NTSSA rules (See NTSSA rule 4, RULES FOR REGISTRATION OF YOUTH PLAYERS)

In summary, HOTSA requires that:

10.1. A player can request <u>ONLY ONE</u> transfer per soccer year.

10.2. Players require a written release from the Association Registrar in order to play outside of the Association, during a soccer year.

10.3. Any HOTSA qualified player desiring to return to HOTSA, after playing outside the jurisdictional boundaries of the HOTSA, must obtain a release from the NTSSA team where he/she is currently registered.

10.4. Players and coaches should become familiar with existing HOTSA and NTSSA Rules and the latest HOTSA policy if they are anticipating the request for a release for a player, especially regarding any request to play outside HOTSA.

11. **INELIGIBLE OR IMPROPER REGISTRATION**

11.1. Any team playing an ineligible or unregistered player shall forfeit the game(s) in which that player takes part.

11.2. Any coach, assistant coach, or team manager who may be responsible for playing ineligible or unregistered player(s) shall be subject to suspension and/or other penalties as may be determined by HOTSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee.

11.3. All teams and players are subject to roster verification during any competition under the auspices of HOTSA.

12. **COACHES**

12.1. Only the Head Coach shall have the privilege of having his or her child assigned to their team's roster provided the player meets the age requirements of the League.

12.2. All coaches and/or managers shall be required to submit and pass an Annual Risk Management course and background check in accordance with NTSSA.

12.3. Only players who are currently rostered to the Coach's team are allowed to participate in practices and league games for such team. There will be no swapping of players at any time. Any coaches found to have allowed non-rostered players to participate in team practices will be subject to a hearing by the HOTSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee.

12.4. All Head Coaches must complete a coaching course within the first year of becoming the head coach. Assistant Coaches are encouraged to complete the same certification as the Head Coach.

12.5. The Head Coach and Assistant Coach of record are to be active coaches for the team and not in name only.

12.6. The Head Coach and one volunteer shall have their annual NTSSA Registration Fees paid by the Association. Any additional assistant coaches or managers shall be required to submit a fee, as determined by HOTSA, to the Association for registration with NTSSA. The fee is due prior to the first week of play and if not received, additional coaches or managers shall be removed from the team roster until said time as fees are paid.

12.7. In the event a team loses its Head Coach, the Age Group Commissioner will offer the team to the Assistant Coach and the parents of the team before selecting a Head Coach from the outside.

12.8. A Head Coach may relinquish his/her team to a coach who was not an assistant coach of said team, or any other team in the Age Group, provided that person does not have a child eligible to participate within the Age Group.

12.9. Each Head Coach has one (1) vote at any Annual General Meeting of the Association at which they are entitled to vote.

12.10. Coaches will be held responsible for any misbehavior on the part of the team's spectators, parents, and players. This includes any foul and abusive language and any comments directed toward the referees, opposing players, and coaches.

12.11. Coaches are responsible for following the league's substitution policy (see Playing Time in the Playing Rules section of this book).

12.12. Coaches are subject to the jurisdiction of HOTSA, its Age Group Commissioners and the Board of Directors and all HOTSA rules and policies. The Age Group Commissioners shall approve all coaches in their league. Coaches in good standing and teams in good standing are permitted and welcomed.

12.13 Any recreational coach who knowingly and/or willingly requests to drop a player from their roster, or advises that player not to play for their team, whether through direct contact or coercion shall be called before the HOTSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee and, if found to be in violation of the offense, may be suspended from coaching

12.14 Coaching players in the HOTSA program is a privilege. Coaches who do not adhere to the Association's rules and/or do not promote a positive experience for the players may be removed at any time as deemed necessary by the League Director or the HOTSA Board of Directors.

13. **THE BALL**

The game ball is provided by the home team as indicated on the schedule.

14. **IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

Each coach/assistant coach and manager whose name appears on the team roster is required to exhibit a valid HOTSA Identification card during all games, when requested by a NTSSA representative, HOTSA Board member and/or referee. HOTSA issues ID cards for rostered head/assistant coach and manager upon completing and submitting annual Risk Management as required by NTSSA.

15. **PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

15.1. Recreational teams registered in this Association shall be allowed no more than five (5) private practices conducted by a paid coach within any single soccer season. This rule shall not apply to individual players who seek the private tutoring of a soccer coach. Nor shall this rule apply to participation in organized soccer clinics.

15.2. Paid coaches shall not have a role in coaching a recreational team while that team is playing a game sanctioned by this Association or in an Inter-Association game which was organized by this Association.

15.3. Unauthorized usage (e.g., practices, scrimmages, games) of the game fields will not be permitted.

15.4. HOTSA Field Practice Policy:

15.4.1. If a recreational team enters into the "Team Field Usage Agreement" with Heart of Texas Soccer, the teams agree to abide by Practice Guidelines as outlined in this Section.

15.4.2. The coach is responsible for the behavior and conduct of the players, parents, and spectators at practice. Any language, actions, or other behaviors that are in conflict with the Rules & Bylaws established by HOTSA will be grounds for a hearing conducted by the HOTSA Rules & Discipline Committee.

15.4.3. If you arrive to find the gates locked, under no circumstances are individuals allowed to enter the facility.

15.4.4. Practice shall only occur on the field indicated on the "Team Field Usage Agreement".

15.4.5. Goals may not be moved for any reason. Moving of goals will only be conducted by HOTSA personnel or directors.

15.4.6. Shooting and/or Goalkeeper training inside the marked goal area shall be strictly limited. This time will be determined by Fields and Facilities. This policy is being enacted to maintain the integrity of the field within the goal area. Violation of this rule will result in a fine of $100 per violation. Teams may not utilize the field until the fine has been paid and the team is cleared to practice by the HOTSA Field and Facilities Director.

15.4.7. Goalkeepers cannot put marks in the goal or penalty area for reference points.

15.4.8. Extended Goalkeeper training activities should be conducted outside of the penalty area, preferably near the sides of the field.

15.4.9. Repetitive activities such as ladder training, grid training, etc should be done in areas that are not heavily utilized during normal play.

15.4.10. Digging up the field with cleats or purposely damaging the field will not be tolerated.

15.4.11. Only those individuals involved directly in the training should be on the field during practice. All other spectators should remain off the field of play.

15.4.12. Teams are responsible for cleaning up all trash including food, drink bottles, paper cups, etc and placing them in appropriate trash containers. Violation of this rule will result in a fine of $50 per violation. Teams may not utilize the field until the fine has been paid and the team is cleared to practice by the HOTSA Field and Facilities Director.

15.4.13. Rental time includes set up, warm up, cool down, and break down. Teams should not get on field before their scheduled time. Teams should leave the fields at the scheduled end time.

15.4.14. HOTSA reserves the right to close fields at any time due to inclement weather or if they deem the fields unplayable. Closure will not result in any refunds.

16. **THE RIGHTS OF PLAYERS AND THEIR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

16.1. If, at any time during the course of the existence of a team, a coach, assistant coach, team manager, or any individual who is delegated any team responsibility exhibits irresponsibility or character that may be deemed detrimental to the development of a player, that individual may be required to surrender his or her position by HOTSA.

16.2. A request for such action from parents/guardians must be submitted in writing to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee. If that request is signed by at least fifty percent (50%) of a team's parents/guardians (each child's family counting as one signature), the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall hear the request.

16.3. The Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall decide whether to grant the request.

16.4. Offenders are subject to removal from their position and up to a one-year suspension from all HOTSA soccer-related activities.

17. **CODE OF ETHICS:**

17.1. Players. All players registered in HOTSA shall abide by the USYSA Player's Code:

17.1.1. Play the game for the game's sake.
17.1.2. Be generous when you win.
17.1.3. Be grateful when you lose.
17.1.4. Be fair always no matter the cost.
17.1.5. Obey the laws of the game.
17.1.6. Work for the good of the team.
17.1.7. Accept the decisions of the officials with good grace.
17.1.8. Believe in the honesty of your opponents.
17.1.9. Conduct yourself with honor and dignity.

17.2. Coaches. All coaches, assistant coaches, managers and team representatives in HOTSA shall abide by the NTSSA Code of Ethics for Coaches:

17.2.1. Responsibility to Players:

17.2.1.1. The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of the players. Winning should be the result of preparation and discipline with emphasis placed in the highest ideals and character traits.

17.2.1.2. Coaches shall instruct players to play within the written laws of the games and within the spirit of the game at all times.

17.2.1.3. Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.

17.2.1.4. Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.

17.2.1.5. Demands on players' time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals and progress. Motivation for excellence should include academics as well as athletics.

17.2.1.6. Coaches must never encourage players to violate NTSSA recruitment, eligibility, or guest player rules and policies.

17.2.1.7. Under no circumstances should coaches authorize or encourage the use of medicinal or performance enhancing drugs or supplements of any kind whether legal or illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter. Medication and supplementation of any kind should be the responsibility of the parents and/or legal guardians. Players should be directed to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician's instructions regarding treatment and recovery. At no time should a player be put at risk by returning from injury prematurely or by being forced to play while inured.

17.2.1.8. A coach's dealing with players and parents must be upfront, honest and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to players and parents.

17.2.1.9. In youth recreational league games and recreational tournaments, each player is required to play a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of each game, including overtime. All players on the rostered team must be invited to each tournament in which the team participates.

17.2.2. Responsibility to NTSSA and Member Associations:

17.2.2.1. Adherence to all NTSSA and Member Association rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting, and guest players is mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of every coach to know and understand these rules.

17.2.2.2. Player development and the growth of the player through participation is essential to the growth of the sport. Additionally, the coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport are maintained.

17.2.2.3. Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches should be referred to the appropriate NTSSA Commissioner or Member Association immediately.

17.2.2.4. A coach's dealings with NTSSA and Member Associations (including playing leagues) must be upfront, honest, and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to NTSSA and Member Associations (including playing leagues).

17.2.3. Responsibility to Laws of the Game:

17.2.3.1. Coaches should be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws of the game of soccer. Coaches are also responsible to ensure that their players understand the intent as well as the application of the laws.

17.2.3.2. Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the laws of the game. Those coaches who circumvent the rules to gain advantage have no place in soccer.

17.2.3.3. Coaches are responsible for their players' actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with the intent of causing injury to opposing players.

17.2.3.4. If coaches permit, encourage, or condone performance which is not in the letter or spirit of the laws, they are derelict in their responsibility to players, Member Associations, NTSSA and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive constantly to teach good sporting behavior.

17.2.4. Responsibility to Officials:

17.2.4.1. Officials must have the support of coaches, players and spectators. Criticism of officials undermines their purpose in the games. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing officials in the presence of players.

17.2.4.2. Coaches must strive to develop a line of communication with officials, giving each an opportunity to better understand the problems relating to their specific area. This section shall not be taken as encouragement to debate referee decisions during the match.

17.2.4.3. On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during, and after the game. Officials should be addressed as "Referee" or "Mr./Mrs. Referee" and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture

between official, coach or player. coaches must not incite players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of play.

17.2.4.4. Comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the official.

17.2.5. Responsibility Regarding Scouting and Recruiting:

17.2.5.1. It is unethical to scout any team, by any means whatsoever, except in regularly scheduled games.

17.2.5.2. The use of video tape or motion picture equipment to scout an opponent's regularly scheduled games for the purpose of recruiting is unethical.

17.2.5.3. All NTSSA rules pertaining to recruiting shall be strictly observed by the coach, manager or any team representative.

17.2.5.4. It is unethical to recruit a player(s) actively playing for another team

17.2.5.5. It is unethical for a player to be recruited or enticed from the Olympic Development Program (ODP) setting, either by his ODP coach or any other coach, manager, parent or team representative.

17.2.5.6. When discussing the advantages of his/her organization, the coach has the ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams, and organizations.

17.2.5.7. It is unethical for any coach to make a statement to a prospective athlete which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver the same.

17.2.5.8. Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts rather than hearsay and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of video tape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.

17.2.6. Responsibility for Public Relations:

17.2.6.1. Coaches have a responsibility to promote the game of soccer to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, coaches, players, parents or the media should be positive and constructive, never prejudicial or inflammatory.

17.2.6.2. When asked to give a recommendation concerning team, camp, coach or organization, it is in the best interest of all concerned if no less than three referrals are given in order to provide a professional unbiased source of information.

17.2.6.3. Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves best properly when in public while representing their team, Member Association and NTSSA.

17.2.6.4. Publicly predicting a win is folly and serves no useful place in a coach's public image.

17.2.6.5. Comments stressing injuries, team, personnel conflicts, or disciplinary problems as an excuse for a loss or unsuccessful endeavor are detrimental and should be avoided.

17.2.6.6. It is unethical for a coach to solicit parents to pressure organizations, Member Associations, or NTSSA to alter established rules. The coach must not attempt to influence these organizations in political or financial dealings outside the framework of their own rules and laws.

17.2.6.7. The media should be allowed access to the players for comment. Players should be instructed in how to conduct themselves during an interview.

17.2.7. Game Day and Other Responsibilities:

17.2.7.1. A coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, his organization, and the sport of soccer. This is never more evident than on the day of the contest.

17.2.7.2. Rival coaches shall meet prior to the game and exchange friendly or professional greetings. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.

17.2.7.3. During play, coaches have a responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible. Coaches shall exhibit respectful attitude towards players. The coach must confine her/himself to the coaching area. The attitude of the coach towards officials, spectators, opposing players and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.

17.2.7.4. It shall be unethical for a coach to have any verbal altercation with an opposing coach or bench during the game. Hostile physical contact with a player is considered highly unethical.

17.2.7.5. The coach's foremost postgame responsibility is her/his team.

17.2.7.6. Coaches should use their influence on unfriendly spectators who demonstrate intimidating behavior towards officials and opposing teams. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their team's spectators and parents.

17.2.7.7. Coaches must act in a professional manner at all times when in the presence of players, whether at games, practice, or in any other setting. A coach demonstrating behavior that could be considered by a reasonable person to be irrational, inappropriate, or unbecoming an adult will not be tolerated. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lewd gestures or remarks
- Overly critical remarks
- ranting and Raving
- Snide or demeaning remarks
- Threatening behavior or remarks
- Physical confrontations
- Temper outbursts

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17.3. Parents. All parents of HOTSA players shall abide by the Parent's Code of conduct:

17.3.1. Children have more need of example than criticism. Attempt to relieve the pressure of competition, not increase it. A child is easily affected by outside influences.

17.3.2. Be kind to your child's coaches and officials. The coach is a volunteer, giving of her or his personal time and money to provide recreational activity for your child.

17.3.3. The opponents are necessary friends. Without them your child could not participate.

17.3.4. Applaud good play by your team and by members of the opposing team.

17.3.5. Do not openly question an official's judgment and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity, and sportsmanship.

17.3.6. Accept the results of the game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory, and to turn defeat into victory by working towards improvements.

17.3.7. Remember your children are involved in organized sport for their enjoyment-not yours.

17.3.8. Encourage your child to always play by the rules.

17.3.9. Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue punishment.

17.3.10. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from your child's sporting activities.

17.3.11. Remember that soccer is a team sport. Encourage your child to work with his or her teammates. Avoid giving special rewards to your child for scoring. No one player wins or loses a game.

17.3.12. Remember that your child learns by example. Children mimic what their parents say. Criticism of the coach, official, teammates, and/or opposition fosters bad attitudes and can only lead to a negative experience for your child.

17.3.13. Parents should remember that a coach has an entire team of players to consider when making decisions regarding position, playing time, substitutions and strategy. The team does not revolve around one player.

17.3.14. A parent must never misrepresent to their team their child's eligibility to play on that team, and must be honest in dealings with HOTSA, NTSSA and Member Associations (including playing leagues).

17.3.15. A parent must never be verbally or physically violent or threatening with any coach, parent, player, or representative of HOTSA or NTSSA.

Any violation of the above may result in a warning, and/or suspension from all HOTSA related activities. Offenders can be subject to suspension from the HOTSA for an indefinite period of time. Parents and interested spectators will be expected to display good sportsmanship at all times. It must be remembered that all adults are examples for our youth.

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18. **GAME PROCEDURES**

18.1. Players, parents and spectators must remain behind the designated technical area. The coaches' technical area is defined as marked on the sideline and is perpendicular to the half. Only rostered and ID'd coaches may be in this designated coaching area at any time. During play, coaches may be allowed on the field when the game is stopped and ONLY with the Referee's approval. Failure to comply may cause forfeitures and/or abandonment of the game.

18.2. All spectators shall occupy the side of the field opposite of the players and coaches, ideally directly opposite of the team they are supporting. Spectators of games are not permitted to sit behind the goals or anywhere along the endline. The Referee shall be charged to enforce this rule and make sure that only Players, Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Team Managers are the only ones occupying the designated side of the field for this purpose.

18.3. The Home Team is responsible for providing contrasting jerseys/shirts in the event of a conflict of color. The final decision on whether there is a color conflict is up to the referee.

18.4. A Sit Out Verification Form shall be required for any coach or player who is required to sit out a game due to disciplinary reasons. This form must be submitted to the referee for his/her signature prior to the game. The Game Report and Sit Out Verification Form (if applicable) must be submitted by the referee to HOTSA within 48 hours of the game.

18.5. Teams MUST report to the playing fields ready to play unless previously OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED. A grace period not to exceed ten minutes will be allowed after the starting time. After the grace period, forfeiture for the team not in attendance will be declared. A double forfeit will be declared if neither team arrives within ten minutes of game time. A FORFEIT is equivalent to a LOSS. No points will be accumulated for forfeiting teams. Coaches have the responsibility of verifying game times with the most current Schedule of Games. The team that forfeits a game will not be eligible for said game to be rescheduled.

18.6. Field Guidelines:

18.6.1. Goalkeeper pre-match warmups shall be done outside of the penalty area.

18.6.2. Pre-match shooting activities may take place within the penalty area, but should not take place within the goal area. Shooting activities on goal shall be limited to ten minutes.

18.6.3. Teams are responsible for cleaning up all trash including food, drink bottles, paper cups, etc and placing in appropriate trash containers. Violation of this rule will result in a fine of $50 per violation. Teams will be required to present payment of the fine prior to the next league game.

19. **FOUL WEATHER PROCEDURES:**

19.1. The Referee or any member of the Board of Directors has the authority to postpone a game because of weather or field conditions. Their decision will be based on the conditions of the playing field, player safety and well-being. All activities including practices and games will be postponed in the event that lightning is present within miles.

19.2. The Referee or any member of the Board of Directors may call a stoppage of play in case of rumbling thunder or lightning.

19.3. Teams MUST report to the playing fields ready to play unless previously OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED. Coaches must not assume that a game has been postponed. A grace period not to exceed ten minutes will be allowed after the starting time. After the grace period, forfeiture for the team not in attendance will be declared. A double forfeit will be declared if neither team arrives within ten minutes of game time. A FORFEIT is equivalent to a LOSS. No points will be accumulated for forfeiting teams..

19.4. The Referee Chairman will notify the Scheduler and respective League Directors of all games postponed or suspended by Referees. Notification of postponement should be made to the League Directors within twenty-four (24) hours.

19.5. If a game is suspended because of FOUL WEATHER before the second half has started, that game shall be replayed from the start. If a game is suspended after the second half has begun, the game shall be considered a FULL GAME and will not be replayed.

20. **RESCHEDULING GAMES**

20.1. PRE-SEASON:

Every effort will be made to meet a team's conflict, provided they:

20.1.1. Have submitted a HOTSA Conflict Form to the Scheduler, by the indicated deadline for the season.

20.2. IN-SEASON:

Any request made during the season must be submitted to the Scheduler and Age Group Commissioner no later than one week prior to the date of conflict. The rescheduled date and time must be agreed upon by all parties and confirmed by the Age Group Commissioner at least 72hrs in advance of the originally scheduled game.

The Scheduler will determine field availability. The Scheduler will notify the Referee Assignor, the Field and Facilities Director, and the League Commissioners of the rescheduled game(s). It will be the Age Group Commissioner's duty to notify their teams of the rescheduled games.

21. **GAME PROTESTS, APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES**

21.1. HOTSA shall operate a system for filing protests, appeals, grievances, and the like, as described under the Article IX of the HOTSA By-Laws.

21.2. Protests, grievances, and the like against the conduct of referees must be filled with the Referee Liaison. JUDGEMENT CALLS BY REFEREES MAY NOT BE PROTESTED!!!! It is the responsibility of the Referee Liaison to determine the validity of such actions and to handle this within the association. Persons filing such charges should direct them to the Referee Liaison through the HOTSA office. After complete investigation the Referee Liaison will make a written report to the HOTSA Executive Committee with findings and recommendations.

21.3. A coach shall have the right to request that a specified referee not call games for his/her team. Such requests shall be given to the appropriate Age Group Commissioner, who will, at his/her discretion take one or both of the following actions:

21.3.1. Request that two (2) Board of Directors members assist the Age Group Commissioner in observing a game called by that referee in which the complaining coach is coaching.

21.3.2. Request of the Referee Assignor that the specified referee not call such games. In some cases, it may not be possible to comply with this request.

21.4. Protests:

21.4.1. There shall be no protests in Under-5, Under-6, Under-7 & Under-8 league play.

21.4.2. All protests of game matters shall be submitted in writing to HOTSA within forty-eight (48) hours of the game, accompanied by a $50 fee.

21.4.3. $50 fee shall be returned if protest is upheld.

21.4.4. Protests of any other type may be made within five (5) days to the appropriate Age Group Commissioner, who will take whatever action is necessary.

21.4.5. All protests received by the Age Group Commissioner must be resolved within five (5) days of receipt.

21.4.6. All appeals of an Age Group Commissioner's decision of a protest must be filed within seventy-two (72) hours of the Commissioner's decision on said protest.

21.4.7. The A&D Chairperson shall review the protest to determine the situation and the validity of the protest. A game may be protested only if:

21.4.7.1. There has been an obvious error made in the application of the Laws of the Game that directly affects the outcome of the match **and the Referee admits it.** (Note: The Laws of the Games are the FIFA Laws of the Game as modified by NTSSA/HOTSA).

21.4.7.2. A team has played an ineligible or suspended player.

21.4.7.3. A team's suspended coach was present and coaching the team: and/or

21.4.7.4. There has been a violation of the minimum playing requirements for any player, as outlined in the HOTSA Playing Rules.

21.4.8. The HOTSA A&D Committee shall receive protests and grievances through its Chairperson and shall meet to consider them within seven (7) days of their receipt. All involved parties, coaches, and players shall be notified of the hearing and shall be requested to be present. Failure to attend after being requested to do so may cause default of the protest or require other action to be taken.

21.4.9. The HOTSA A&D Committee shall not assume that a game result should be changed strictly on the basis of a protest being valid because a Law of the Game has been broken or for any other valid reason. Game protests should be upheld on the basis of the merits of the protest and the entire circumstances or was not affected by the events referred to in the protest of the game.

21.5. Appeals:

21.5.1. Decisions from the HOTSA A&D Committee and other organizations under the jurisdiction of HOTSA, may be appealed to the HOTSA Board of Directors with the President receiving the appeal directly. The appeal must be received by the President within forty-eight (48) hours of the decision. The HOTSA Board of Directors shall be the only level of appeal prior to the Appeals and Disciplinary

Committee of NTSSA. The procedure for filing an appeal is the same as for protests. All involved parties, coaches, and players shall be notified of the hearing and shall be requested to be present. Failure to attend after being requested to do so may cause default of the appeal or require other action to be taken.

21.5.2. Decisions of the HOTSA Board of Directors may be appealed to the NTSSA A&D Committee through the State Office and, then, to their Executive Committee and on to the USYSA/USSF and FIFA through their appeals and protest policies and procedures, upon payment of such fees and filing of such forms as required through these organizations at that time.

21.6. Grievances*:

These shall be handled in the same manner as protests with the HOTSA Office or League Official accepting the grievance. An initial fee is not required. Grievances will then be forwarded to the appropriate committee, which shall determine whether a formal hearing should be called, and a fee is required.

*Definition of Grievances: A wrong, real or fancied, considered as grounds for complaint against an unjust act.

21.7. Rule on all player release requests. (Refer to NTSSA Rule 3-11) RECOURSE TO COMMISSIONER'S DECISIONS: Since the League Commissioner is empowered with some approval and veto authority related to players' assignments; the individual coach or manager should be left with some recourse or appeal to these decisions. With a properly functioning League Commissioner, i.e., one hearing, suggesting, guiding, helping and compromising rather than dictating, there should be little, if any, need for appeals. However, for cases not reconciled at the League Commissioner's level the Coach or Manager may address the matter, IN WRITING, to the HOTSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee.

22. **GUEST PLAYER**

There will be no guest players allowed for HOTSA league play.

For tournament play, the use of guest player is sanctioned by NTSSA and HOTSA under the following restrictions:

22.1. The number of guest players sanctioned by NTSSA may be added to a team for the purpose of playing in USYSA sanctioned tournaments providing:

22.1.1. The tournament allows guest players. (Refer to specific tournament rules for the maximum number of players allowed)

22.1.2. The guest players are previously registered to a sanctioned team, or are registered through a sanctioned NTSSA organization but not on an existing team roster.

22.1.3. Each guest player has submitted to the HOTSA Registrar a completed Guest Player Release form signed by the releasing coach and the home association.

22.1.4. The completed Guest Player Release Form must be submitted to the Association Registrar prior to participating in any practices with the team that the player is seeking to play. Violation of this rule is grounds for possible sanctions by the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee.

22.2. Any player playing as a guest player may not be transferred or assigned to the hosting team's roster for the remainder of the current soccer year, and all of the following soccer year, unless the player transfer is approved by the home association (NTSSA Rule 4.8.1).

Players registered to a competitive team are ineligible to participate as guest players for a recreational team playing in a recreational tournament.

23. **TRYOUTS AND RECRUITING**

23.1. A tryout is any event that attempts to judge a player's ability and skills for the purpose of placement with a team, or for addition to a team's tournament roster via the "Guest Player". THERE SHALL BE NO TRYOUTS.

23.1.1. If a team and/or coach violate the rules concerning tryouts, the coach and/or team involved shall appear before the HOTSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee. Either or both may be suspended from participation in HOTSA for a period of one (1) year.

23.2. Recruiting as it applies to recreational soccer, is any action by any team representative (including but not limited to a coach, assistant coach, manager, player or parent/guardian) who induces or entices, or causes to be induced or entices, by word or action, a player of any team to seek a release from the team to which that player bound to allow that player to join another team for any purpose. No coach, assistant, coach, trainer or other team representative may practice any soccer-related activity with any NTSSA registered player that does not appear on her/his roster or has written permission or an appropriate guest player release from the player's coach of record.

23.3. Recruiting ~~of~~ or attempting to recruit registered players from an HOTSA recreational team by anyone to play on any other recreational or competitive team is strictly prohibited.

23.4. It shall be assumed that a team has recruited if:

23.4.1. It can be established that any representative of that team in question has actively solicited a player to another team to join their team by talking to any team member, parent of any team member, Assistant Coach of any team member or having anyone else talk to the team members or their parents without the written permission from the Head Coach and/or League Commissioner of that age group.

23.4.2. For any violation of this rule, the Coach concerned and all offending parties shall appear before the HOTSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee. The Coach and all participating persons may be suspended from participation in HOTSA for a minimum of one (1) year for the first offense. For repeat offenders, action may include longer suspensions, expulsion from HOTSA, or other penalties.

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24. **PLAYERS EQUIPMENT**

*NOTE TO PARENTS: For HOTSA Playing league, jewelry of any kind will not be allowed and must be removed, excluding religious and medical requirements.

24.1. Players will wear the uniform or shirt provided by Heart of Texas Soccer during recreational league play. Teams may not purchase other uniforms and wear them in lieu of the recreation uniform provided to them. If a team does wear a uniform other than that which was provided to them for league play, the coach will be brought before A&D for a hearing. Each player should wear a numbered shirt (number must be on the back of the shirt) of the same colors as their teammates.. The referee shall make the final decision in allowing or disallowing a player to participate. The final decision on whether there is a color conflict is up to the referee. In the event two teams are to play and the normal jersey of both teams are identical or similar in color such that confusion might arise, the home team shall be instructed by the referee to wear a contrasting shirt, or " pinny", over the jersey so that they are all the same color for that team, whether or not these substitution shirts are numbered. The referee shall make the final decision in approving or disapproving alternate jerseys.

24.2. Properly sized shin guards are mandatory for all players. Socks must be worn over the shin guards with the shin guards to be completely hidden from view. ~~Shirts must be tucked in.~~

24.3. The goalkeeper will wear colors that distinguish him/her from other players, from the referee and from all members of the opposing team.

24.4. Players shall not wear anything that is dangerous to himself or herself or to another player (for example, jewelry, broken cleats, earrings etc.) at the discretion of the referee. Earrings of any kind are not allowed.

24.5. Players wearing eyeglasses are encouraged to wear an eyeglass retainer strap.

24.6. Under foul weather conditions, additional garments (knit caps, gloves, and warm-ups) may be worn as long as the team jersey is on the outside.

24.7. Soccer cleats, Gym shoes, tennis shoes, or soccer boots must be worn by all players. All footwear must be of soft toe and have No metal studs (screw-ins) or any other exposed metal. Baseball cleats are not allowed.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

UNDER 4 - PLAYING RULES

1. LAW I – THE FIELD OF PLAY

The field size below is the HOTSA recommended, but may vary depending on field availability.
The field of play is 20 (twenty) yards wide by 30 (thirty) yards long.
A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
The center circle is 4 (four) yards in radius.
The corner area is 1 (one) yard.
The goal size is 4 (four) feet high and 6 (six) feet wide.

LAW II - THE BALL

2.1 The ball is a size 3 (three). (See General Rules – Rule 13)

3. **LAW III – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

3.1 Teams are comprised of players using the following guidelines:

League	Maximum	Minimum
Under 4	6	4

3.2 The number of players on each side shall be as follows:

League	Players
Under 4	3

3.3 No Goal Keepers are allowed in this Age Group.

3.4 Substitutions

3.4.1. For an injured player, when the referee stops play;

3.4.2. At a quarter break.

3.4.3. For any stoppage in play caused by the ball leaving the field.

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4. **LAW IV – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT**

4.1 Players equipment must conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

4.1.1 Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

4.1.2 No Jewelry of any sort (this includes earrings).

4.1.3 Casts below the elbow are allowed provided the cast is sufficiently wrapped to the satisfaction of the Referee. Casts above the elbow are not allowed.

***NOTE TO PARENTS**: Shin guards are mandatory for all practices and games. Players will not be allowed to participate without them.

5. **LAW V – THE REFEREE**

5.1 Registered Referee.

5.2 Parent/Coach or Assistant who must remember that he/she is serving as an official.

5.3 Referee's decisions on points of facts connected to the game shall be final.

5.4 All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

5.5 Only registered referees have the power to caution or send off players

5.6 A referee is not mandatory, but if there is one available, then they will be used. If a referee is not available, the coaches will either referee the game themselves or agree upon a third party.

***NOTE**: A referee is not required, nor necessary to oversee games in this age group. If a referee is not available, the coaches should agree on a nonpartisan individual to oversee the match.

6. **LAW VI – THE ASSISTANT REFEREE**

6.1 None

7. ***LAW VII – THE DURATION OF MATCH***

EACH PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH GAME.

7.1 The game shall be divided into 4 six-minute quarters with a 2-minute break between quarters and a 5-minute half-time period.

7.2 Teams that are not ready to play within 10 minutes of published time will forfeit the game. There will be no time stoppage for any reason.

8. ***LAW VIII - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY***

8.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

8.1.1 Opponents must be 4 (four) yards from the center mark while kicking off is in progress.

8.1.2 Restart and the end of the quarter shall be with the proper restart for the reason play was stopped (e.g., throw in, goal kick, corner kick, etc.)

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9. ***LAW XI – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY***

    9.1 Conform to **FIFA.**

10. **LAW X - METHOD OF SCORING**

    10.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

11. **LAW XI – OFFSIDE**

    11.1 There shall be no off-side.

12. **LAW XII - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT**

    12.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

        12.1.1 All fouls will result in an indirect free kick with the opponents 4 (four) yards away.

        12.1.2 The Referee must explain all infractions to the offending player.

        12.1.3 No "two touches" on kicks.

*NOTE: Any player that is sent off can be replaced with another player from the same team. The player being sent off must sit out the rest of that game.

13. **LAW XIII - FREE KICKS**

    13.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

        13.1.1 Kick-off, throw-ins, goal kick and fouls are indirect kicks (i.e. a goal cannot be scored by kicking the ball directly into the goal: the ball must first be touched by another player).

        13.1.2 Defending players must be at least 4 (four) yards from the ball at the time of the free kick.

14. **LAW XIV – PENALTY KICK**

    14.1 No Penalty kicks are to be taken during these games.

15. **LAW XV – Throw-in**

    15.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

        15.1.1 If a throw is done improperly, a second throw-in must be allowed. The referee shall explain the proper method before allowing the player to re-throw.

        15.1.2 No "Second Touches" are allowed on throw-ins. The throw in must be retaken.

        15.1.3 The defending player shall be at least 2 yards from the ball at the time of the throw in.

16. LAW XVI – Goal Kick

16.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

16.1.1 Opponents must be 4 (four) yards away.

16.1.2 The goal kick may be taken anywhere on the goal line between the goal and the corner arc. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

17. **LAW XVII – Corner Kick**

17.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

17.1.1 Opponents must be 4 (four) yards away.

18 **OTHER GENERAL RULES**

18.1 Coaches should not be on the field during play, unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

18.2 Score is not kept during games. At the end of the game there are no winners or losers. ALL kids are winners.

18.3 Only coaches and players are to be in the technical area (i.e. the space between the two fields) during the game. Parents and spectators may not be in the technical area. Parents and spectators should remain two yards back from the touch lines on the side of the field opposite of the players and coaches.

18.4 Playing Restrictions:

18.4.1 If in the opinion of the referee a team is guilty of intentionally placing a player in front of their goal while his/her team is on the attack, the referee shall stop play, warn the team, and restart with an indirect free kick to the other team at the point where the ball was at the time of the stoppage.

***NOTE TO COACH:** The intent of this rule is to encourage ALL players to be involved in the play of the game.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

UNDER 5 THROUGH UNDER 6 - PLAYING RULES

1. LAW I - THE FIELD OF PLAY

The field size below is the HOTSA recommended, but may vary depending on field availability.
The field of play is 20 (twenty) yards wide by 30 (thirty) yards long.
A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
The center circle is 4 (four) yards in radius.
The corner area is 1 (one) yard.
The goal size is 4 (four) feet high and 6 (six) feet wide.

2. LAW II - THE BALL

2.1 The ball is a size 3 (three). (See General Rules – Rule 13)

3. LAW III – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

3.1 Teams are comprised of players using the following guidelines:

League	Maximum	Minimum
Under 5	6	4
Under 6	6	4

3.2 The number of players on each side shall be as follows:

League	Players
Under 5	3
Under 6	3

3.3 No Goal Keepers are allowed in this Age Group.

3.4 Substitutions

3.4.1. For an injured player, when the referee stops play;

3.4.2. At a quarter break.

3.4.3. For any stoppage in play caused by the ball leaving the field.

***NOTE:** Coaches, spectators, or parents shall not enter the field of play for any reason without permission of the referee.

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4. LAW IV – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

4.1 Players equipment must conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

4.1.1 Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

4.1.2 No Jewelry of any sort (this includes earrings).

4.1.3 Casts below the elbow are allowed provided the cast is sufficiently wrapped to the satisfaction of the Referee. Cast above the elbow are not allowed.

***NOTE TO PARENTS**: Shin guards are mandatory for all practices and games. Players will not be allowed to participate without them.

5. LAW V – THE REFEREE

5.1 Registered Referee.

5.2 Parent/Coach or Assistant who must remember that he/she is serving as an official.

5.3 Referee's decisions on points of facts connected to the game shall be final.

5.4 All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

5.5 Only registered referees have the power to caution or send off players

5.6 A referee is not mandatory, but if there is one available, then they will be used. If a referee is not available, the coaches will either referee the game themselves or agree upon a third party.

6. LAW VI – THE ASSISTANT REFEREE

6.1 None

7. LAW VII – THE DURATION OF MATCH

<u>EACH PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH GAME.</u>

7.1 The game shall be divided into 4 eight-minute quarters with a 2-minute between quarters and a 5-minute half-time period.

7.2 Teams that are not ready to play within 10 minutes of published time will forfeit the game. <u>There will be no time stoppage for any reason.</u>

8. LAW VIII - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

8.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

8.1.1 Opponents must be 4 (four) yards from the center mark while kicking off is in progress.

8.1.2 Restart and the end of the quarter shall be with the proper restart for the reason play

was stopped (e.g., throw in, goal kick, corner kick, etc.)

9. LAW XI – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

9.1 Conform to **FIFA.**

10. LAW X - METHOD OF SCORING

10.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

11. LAW XI – OFFSIDE

11.1 There shall be no off-side.

12. LAW XII - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

12.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

12.1.1 All fouls will result in an indirect free kick with the opponents 4 (four) yards away.

12.1.2 The Referee must explain all infractions to the offending player.

12.1.3 No "two touches" on kicks.

*NOTE: Any player that is sent off can be replaced with another player from the same team. The player being sent off must sit out the rest of that game.

13. LAW XIII - FREE KICKS

13.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

13.1.1 Kick-off, throw-ins, goal kick and fouls are indirect kicks (i.e. a goal cannot be scored by kicking the ball directly into the goal: the ball must first be touched by another player).

13.1.2 Defending players must be at least 4 (four) yards from the ball at the time of the free kick.

14. LAW XIV – PENALTY KICK

14.1 No Penalty kicks are to be taken during these games.

15. LAW XV – Throw-in

15.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

15.1.1 If a throw is done improperly, a second throw-in must be allowed. The referee shall explain the proper method before allowing the player to re-throw.

15.1.2 No "Second Touches" are allowed on throw-ins. The throw in must be retaken.

15.1.3 The defending player shall be at least 2 yards from the ball at the time of the throw in.

15.1.4

16. LAW XVI – Goal Kick

16.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

16.1.1 Opponents must be 4 (four) yards away.

16.1.2 The goal kick may be taken anywhere on the end line between the goal and the corner arc. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

17. LAW XVII – Corner Kick

17.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

17.1.1 Opponents must be 4 (four) yards away.

18 OTHER GENERAL RULES

18.1 Coaches are not allowed on the field during play, unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

18.2 Score is not kept during games. At the end of the game there are no winners and losers. ALL kids are winners.

18.3 Only coaches and players are to be in the technical area (i.e. the space between the two fields) during the game. Parents and spectators may not be in the technical area. Parents and spectators should remain two yards back from the touch lines on the side of the field opposite of the players and coaches.

18.4 Playing Restrictions:

18.4.1 If, in the opinion of the referee, a team is guilty of intentionally placing a player in front of their goal while his/her team is on the attack, the referee shall stop play, warn the team, and restart with an indirect free kick to the other team at the point where the ball was at the time of the stoppage.

***NOTE TO COACH:** The intent of this rule is to encourage ALL players to be involved in the play of the game.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

UNDER 7 - PLAYING RULES

1. **LAW I – THE FIELD OF PLAY**

   The field size below is the HOTSA recommended, but may vary depending on field availability.

   The field of play is 20 (twenty) yards wide by 30 (thirty) yards long. A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
   The center circle is 4 (four) yards in radius.
   The corner area is 1 (one) yard.
   The goal size is 4 (4) feet high and 6 (six) feet wide. There is no penalty mark.

2. **LAW II - THE BALL**

   2.1. The ball is a size 3 (three).

3. **LAW III – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

   3.1. Teams are composed of players using the follow guidelines:

League	Maximum	Minimum
Under 7	8	5

   3.2. The number of players on each side is four.

   3.3. A team may not play with less than three (3) players on the field.

   3.4. Substitutions

      3.4.1. For an injured player, when the referee stops play;

      3.4.2. At a quarter break.

      3.4.3. For any stoppage in play caused by the ball leaving the field.

   NOTE: Coaches, spectators, or parents shall not enter the field of play for any reason without permission of the referee.

4. **LAW IV – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT**

   4.1. Players equipment must conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

      4.1.1. Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

      4.1.2. No Jewelry of any sort (this includes earrings).

4.1.3. Casts below the elbow are allowed provided the cast is sufficiently wrapped to the satisfaction of the Referee. Cast above the elbow are not allowed.

5. **LAW V – THE REFEREE**

5.1. Registered Referee

5.2. Associate Referee

5.3. Parent/Coach or Assistant who must remember that he/she is serving as an official

5.4. Referee's decisions on points of facts connected to the game shall be final.

5.5. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

5.6. Only registered referees have the power to caution or send off players

6. **LAW VI – THE ASSISTANT REFEREE**

6.1. None

7. **LAW VII – THE DURATION OF MATCH**

EACH PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH GAME.

7.1. The game shall be divided into 4 10 minute quarters with a 2-minute water break and a 5-minute half-time period.

7.2. Teams that are not ready to play within 10 minutes of published time will forfeit the game. There will be no time stoppage for any reason.

8. **LAW VIII - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY**

8.1. Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

8.1.1. Opponents must be 4 (four) yards from the center mark while kicking off is in progress.

8.1.2. Restart and the end of the water break shall be with the proper restart for the reason play was stopped (e.g., throw in, goal kick, corner kick, etc.)

9. **LAW XI – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY**

9.1. Conform to **FIFA.**

10. **LAW X - METHOD OF SCORING**

10.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

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11. **LAW XI – OFFSIDE**

    11.1. There shall be no offside.

12. **LAW XII - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT**

    15.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

    15.1.1 All fouls will result in an indirect free kick with the opponents 4 (four) yards away.

    15.1.2 The Referee must explain all infractions to the offending player.

    15.1.3 No "two touches" on kicks.

    15.1.4 There is no violation for the ball being kicked above four feet high.

    NOTE: Any player that is sent off can be replaced with another player from the same team. The player being sent off must sit out the rest of that game.

13. **LAW XIII - FREE KICKS**

    16.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

    16.1.1 Kick-off, throw-ins, goal kick and fouls are indirect kicks (i.e. a goal cannot be scored by kicking the ball directly into the goal: the ball must first be touched by another player).

    16.1.2 Defending players must be at least 4 (four) yards from the ball at the time of the free kick.

14. **LAW XIV – PENALTY KICKS**

    14.1. No Penalty kicks are to be taken during these games.

15. **LAW XV – THROW-IN**

    18.1 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

    18.1.1 If a throw is done improperly, a second throw-in must be allowed. The referee shall explain the proper method before allowing the player to re-throw.

    18.1.2 No "Second Touches" are allowed on throw-ins. The throw in must be retaken.

    18.1.3 The defending player shall be at least 2 yards from the ball at the time of the throw in.

16. **LAW XVI – GOAL KICK**

    16.1. Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

    16.1.1. Opponents must be 4 (four) yards away.
    16.1.2. The goal kick may be taken anywhere on the end line between the goal and the corner arc. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

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17. **LAW XVII – CORNER KICK**

17.1. Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

17.1.1. Opponents must be 4 (four) yards away.

18. **OTHER GENERAL RULES**

18.1. Coaches are not allowed on the field during play, unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

18.2. Score is not kept during games. At the end of the game there are no winners and losers. ALL kids are winners.

18.3. Only coaches and players are to be in the technical area (i.e. the space between the two fields) during the game. Parents and spectators may not be in the technical area. Parents and spectators should remain two yards back from the touch lines on the side of the field opposite of the players and coaches.

18.4. Playing Restrictions:

18.4.1. If in the opinion of the referee a team is guilty of intentionally placing a player in front of their goal while his/her team is on the attack, the referee shall stop play, warn the team, and restart with an indirect free kick to the other team at the point where the ball was at the time of the stoppage.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

UNDER 8 - PLAYING RULES

1. **LAW I – THE FIELD OF PLAY**

The field size below is the HOTSA recommended, but may vary depending on field availability.

The field of play is 30 (thirty) yards wide by 45 (forty-five) yards long.
A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
The center circle is 4 (Four) yards in radius.
The corner area is 1 (one) yard.
The goal size is 5 (five) feet high and 12 (twelve) feet wide.
The penalty area is an arc 14 (fourteen) yards wide and 7 (seven) yards deep.
There will be no penalty spot.

2. **LAW II - THE BALL**

2.1. The ball is a size 3 (three). (See General Rules – Rule 13)

3. **LAW III – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

3.1. Teams are composed of players using the follow guidelines:

League	Maximum	Minimum
Under 8	8	5

3.2. The number of players on each side is five, four field players and one goalie.

3.3. A team may not play with less than four (4) players on the field.

3.4. Substitutions shall be unlimited.

All substitutes will enter the field at the mid-field. Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee, at the following times:

3.4.1. At a throw in, by the team in possession. If the team in possession makes a substitution then the team not in possession shall also be allowed to make a substitution;

3.4.2. By Either team, at a goal kick;

3.4.3. By Either team, after a goal is scored;

3.4.4. By Either team, at half-time;

3.4.5. By either team at an injury, when the referee stops play;

3.4.6. When a caution (Yellow Card) is given (that player may be substituted for)

NOTE: Coaches, spectators, or parents shall not enter the field of play for any reason without permission of the referee.

4. **LAW IV – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT**

4.1. Players equipment must conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

4.1.1. Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

4.1.2. No Jewelry of any sort (this includes earrings).

4.1.3. Casts below the elbow are allowed provided the cast is sufficiently wrapped to the satisfaction of the Referee. Cast above the elbow are not allowed.

5. **LAW V – THE REFEREE**

5.1. Registered Referee

5.2. Associate Referee

5.3. Parent/Coach or Assistant who must remember that he/she is serving as an official

5.4. Referee's decisions on points of facts connected to the game shall be final.

5.5. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

5.6. Only registered referees have the power to caution or send off players

6. **LAW VI – THE ASSISTANT REFEREE**

6.1. None

7. **LAW VII – THE DURATION OF MATCH**

EACH PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH GAME.

7.1. The game shall be divided into 2 18 minute halves with a 5-minute half-time period.

7.2. Teams that are not ready to play within 10 minutes of published time will forfeit the game. There will be no time stoppage for any reason.

8. **LAW VIII - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY**

8.1. Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

8.1.1. Opponents must be 5 (five) yards from the center mark while kicking off is in progress.

8.1.2. Restart and the end of the water break shall be with the proper restart for the reason play was stopped (e.g., throw in, goal kick, corner kick, etc.)

9. **LAW XI – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY**

9.1. Conform to **FIFA.**

10. **LAW X - METHOD OF SCORING**

10.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

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11. **LAW XI – OFFSIDE**

    11.1. There shall be no offside.

12. **LAW XII - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT**

    15.2 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

    15.2.1 All fouls will result in an indirect free kick with the opponents 4 (four) yards away.

    15.2.2 The Referee must explain all infractions to the offending player.

    15.2.3 No "two touches" on kicks.

    15.2.4 There is no violation for the ball being kicked above four feet high.

    NOTE: Any player that is sent off can be replaced with another player from the same team. The player being sent off must sit out the rest of that game.

13. **LAW XIII - FREE KICKS**

    16.2 Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

    16.2.1 Kick-off, throw-ins, goal kick and fouls are indirect kicks (i.e. a goal cannot be scored by kicking the ball directly into the goal: the ball must first be touched by another player).

    16.2.2 Defending players must be at least 5 (five) yards from the ball at the time of the free kick.

14. **LAW XIV – PENALTY KICKS**

    14.1. Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

    14.2. Opponents must be at least 5 (five) yards from the ball at the time of the free kick.

15. **LAW XV – THROW-IN**

    18.2 Conform to **FIFA.**

16. **LAW XVI – GOAL KICK**

    16.1. Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

    16.1.1. Opponents must be 5 (five) yards away.
    16.1.2. The goal kick may be taken anywhere on the end line between the goal and the corner arc. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

17. **LAW XVII – CORNER KICK**

    17.1. Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

    17.1.1. Opponents must be 5 (five) yards away.

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18. **OTHER GENERAL RULES**

18.1. Coaches are not allowed on the field during play, unless they are invited by the official for the purpose of assisting an injured player.

18.2. Score is not kept during games. At the end of the game there are no winners and losers. ALL kids are winners.

18.3. Only coaches and players are to be in the technical area (i.e. the space between the two fields) during the game. Parents and spectators may not be in the technical area. Parents and spectators should remain two yards back from the touch lines on the side of the field opposite of the players and coaches.

18.4. There is no punting allowed in this age group. The ball must be put in play by the goalie by a throw, roll, or pass.

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UNDER 9 THROUGH UNDER 10 - PLAYING RULES

1. **LAW I – THE FIELD OF PLAY**

The field size below is the HOTSA recommended, but may vary depending on field availability.

The field of play is 40 (forty) yards wide by 60 (sixty) yards long. A
halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
The center circle is 7 (seven) yards in radius.
The goal area is 8 (eight) yards wide and 4 (four) yards in depth.
The penalty area is 20 (twenty) yards wide and 10 (ten) yards in depth.
A 6 (six) inch diameter penalty spot shall be marked 7 (seven) yards from the center of the goal line.
A 7 (seven) yard penalty arc shall be constructed outside the penalty area centered on the penalty spot.
The corner area is 1 (one) yard.
The goal size is 6 (six) feet high and 18 (eighteen) feet wide.
There will be 2 Build Out lines. Each will be 14 (fourteen) yards from the end lines.

2. **LAW II - THE BALL**

2.1. Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

2.1.1. For U9 thru U10 the ball shall be a size 4 (four). (See General Rules – Rule 13)

3. **LAW III – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

3.1. Teams are composed of players using the follow guidelines:

Leagues	Maximum	Minimum
Under 10	12	8

3.2. The number of players on each side is 7 (seven)

3.3. A team may not play with less than 5 (five) players on the field.

3.4.Substitutions shall be unlimited.

All substitutes will enter the field at the mid-field. Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee, at the following times:

3.4.1. At a throw in, by the team in possession. If the team in possession makes a substitution then the team not in possession shall also be allowed to make a substitution;

3.4.2. By Either team, at a goal kick;

3.4.3. By Either team, after a goal is scored;

3.4.4. By Either team, at half-time;

3.4.5. By either team at an injury, when the referee stops play;

3.4.6. When a caution (Yellow Card) is given (that player may be substituted for)

3.5. Playing Time- Each child in the Recreational Division will play a minimum of 50% of the full game.

NOTE: Coaches, spectators, or parents shall not enter the field of play for any reason without permission of the referee.

4. **LAW IV – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT**

4.1. Players equipment must conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

4.1.1. Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

4.1.2. No Jewelry of any sort (this includes earrings).

4.1.3. Casts below the elbow are allowed provided the cast is sufficiently wrapped to the satisfaction of the Referee. Casts above the elbow are not allowed.

5. **LAW V – THE REFEREE**

5.1. Registered Referee

5.2. Associate Referee

5.3. Parent/Coach or Assistant who must remember that he/she is serving as an official

5.4. Referee's decisions on points of facts connected to the game shall be final.

5.5. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

5.6. Only registered referees have the power to caution or send off players

6. **LAW VI – THE ASSISTANT REFEREE**

6.1. Use Assistant Referees, if available.

7. **LAW VII – THE DURATION OF MATCH**

EACH PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH GAME.

7.1. U10 - The game shall be divided into 2 (two) equal halves of 25 (twenty-five) minutes each.

7.2. Breaks shall be 5 (five) minutes.

7.3. Teams that are not ready to play within 10 minutes of published time will forfeit the game. There will be no time stoppage for any reason.

8. **LAW VIII - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY**

8.1. Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

8.1.1. Opponents must be 7 (seven) yards from the center mark while kicking off is in progress

9. **LAW XI – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY**

9.1. Conform to **FIFA.**
Advice to Players: Note that the whole of the ball must have crossed over the entire goal or touch line before it is out of play; this clearly means that if the ball rolls along one of the lines, it is still in play. In this rule particularly, play to the whistle not the flag; an assistant referee's signal is only intended for the referee, and the latter is the only person empowered to give decisions.

10. **LAW X - METHOD OF SCORING**

10.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

11. **LAW XI – OFFSIDE**

11.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

12. **LAW XII - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT**

12.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

13. **LAW XIII - FREE KICKS**

13.1. Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

13.2. Opponents must be at least 7 (seven) yards from the ball at the time of the free kick.

14. **LAW XIV – PENALTY KICKS**

14.1. Conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

14.2. Opponents must be at least 7 (seven) yards from the ball at the time of the free kick.

15. **LAW XV – THROW-IN**

15.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

16. **LAW XVI – GOAL KICK**

16.1. Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

16.1.1. Opponents must be 7 (seven) yards away.

17. **LAW XVII – CORNER KICK**

17.1. Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

17.1.1. Opponents must be 7 (seven) yards away.

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UNDER 12 – PLAYING RULES

1. **LAW I – THE FIELD OF PLAY**

The field size shall be 50 (fifty) yards wide by 75 (seventy-five) yards long.
A halfway line shall be marked across the field
The center circle is yards in radius.
The goal area is) yards long.
The goal size is 7 feet tall by 21 feet wide

2. **LAW II – THE BALL**

Ball sizes vary as follows: (See General Rules – Rule 13)

Under 11 & 12	Size 4

3. LAW III - THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

3.1.

Leagues	Maximum	Minimum
Under 12	16	10

3.2. The number of players on each side is 9 (nine).

3.3. A team may not play with less than 7 (seven) players on the field.

3.4. Substitutions shall be unlimited.

All substitutes will enter the field at the mid-field. Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee, at the following times:

3.4.1 At a throw in, by the team in possession. If the team in possession makes a substitution then the team not in possession shall also be allowed to make a substitution;

3.4.2 By Either team, at a goal kick;

3.4.3By Either team, after a goal is scored;

3.4.4 By Either team, at half-time;

3.4.5 By either team at an injury, when the referee stops play;

3.4.6 When a caution (Yellow Card) is given (that player may be substituted for)

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3.5 Playing Time- Each child in the Recreational Division will play a minimum of 50% of the full game.

NOTE: Coaches, spectators, or parents shall not enter the field of play for any reason without permission of the referee.

4. **LAW IV – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT**

4.1. Players equipment must conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

4.1.1. Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

4.1.2. No Jewelry of any sort (this includes earrings).

4.1.3. Casts below the elbow are allowed provided the cast is sufficiently wrapped to the satisfaction of the Referee. Cast above the elbow are not allowed.

5. **LAW V – THE REFEREE**

5.1. Registered Referee

5.2. Associate Referee

5.3. Parent/Coach or Assistant who must remember that he/she is serving as an official

5.4. Referee's decisions on points of facts connected to the game shall be final.

5.5. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

5.6. Only registered referees have the power to caution or send off players

6. **LAW VI – THE ASSISTANT REFEREE**

6.1 Conform to FIFA.

7. **LAW VII – THE DURATION OF MATCH**

EACH PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH GAME.

Under 11/12	Two 30 minute halves	5 minute half-time break

7.1 Teams that are not ready to play within 10 minutes of published time will forfeit the game. There will be no time stoppage for any reason

8. **LAW VIII - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY**

8.1. Conform to **FIFA**

9. **LAW XI – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY**

9.1. Conform to **FIFA.**

Advice to Players: Note that the whole of the ball must have crossed over the entire goal or touch line before it is out of play; this clearly means that if the ball rolls along one of the lines, it is still in play. In this rule particularly, play to the whistle not the flag; an assistant referee's signal is only intended for the referee, and the latter is the only person empowered to give decisions

10. **LAW X - METHOD OF SCORING**

10.1 Conform to **FIFA**.

11. **LAW XI – OFFSIDE**

11.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

12. **LAW XII - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT**

12.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

13. **LAW XIII - FREE KICKS**

13.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

14. **LAW XIV – PENALTY KICKS**

14.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

15. **LAW XV – THROW-IN**

15.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

16. **LAW XVI – GOAL KICK**

16.1 Conform to **FIFA**

17. **LAW XVII – CORNER KICK**

17.1. Conform to **FIFA**

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UNDER 13 through UNDER 19 – PLAYING RULES

1. **LAW I – THE FIELD OF PLAY**

Conform to **FIFA**

2. **LAW II – THE BALL**

Under 13 & 14	Size 5

3. **LAW III – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTION**

3.1 Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

3.1.1 Substitutions shall be unlimited.

All substitutes will enter the field at the mid-field. Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee, at the following times:

3.1.1 At a throw in, by the team in possession. If the team in possession makes a substitution then the team not in possession shall also be allowed to make a substitution;

3.1.2 By either team, at a goal kick;

3.1.3 By Either team, after a goal is scored;

3.1.4 By either team, at half-time;

3.1.5 By either team at an injury, when referee stops play;

3.1.6 When a caution (Yellow Card) is given (that player may be substituted for).

3.2 Playing Time- Each child in the Recreational Division will play a minimum of 50% of the full game.

4. **LAW IV – THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT**

4.1. Players equipment must conform to **FIFA** with the following exceptions:

4.1.1. Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

4.1.2. No Jewelry of any sort (this includes earrings).

4.1.3. Casts below the elbow are allowed provided the cast is sufficiently wrapped to the satisfaction of the Referee. Cast above the elbow are not allowed.

5. **LAW V – THE REFEREE**

5.1. Registered Referee

5.2. Associate Referee

5.3. Parent/Coach or Assistant who must remember that he/she is serving as an official

5.4. Referee's decisions on points of facts connected to the game shall be final.

5.5. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

5.6. Only registered referees have the power to caution or send off players

6. **LAW VI – THE ASSISTANT REFEREE**

6.1 Conform to FIFA.

7. **LAW VII – THE DURATION OF MATCH**

EACH PLAYER MUST PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH GAME.

AGE GROUP	Length of Halves	Length of Overtime
UNDER 13 & UNDER 14	Two 35 minute halves	10 minutes
UNDER 15 & UNDER 16	Two 40 minute halves	15 minutes
Under 17 and Older	Two 45 minute halves	15 minutes

7.1 Teams that are not ready to play within 10 minutes of published time will forfeit the game. There will be no time stoppage for any reason

8. **LAW VIII - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY**

8.1. Conform to **FIFA**

9. **LAW XI – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY**

9.1. Conform to **FIFA.**

Advice to Players: Note that the whole of the ball must have crossed over the entire goal or touch line before it is out of play; this clearly means that if the ball rolls along one of the lines, it is still in play. In this rule particularly, play to the whistle not the flag; an assistant referee's signal is only intended for the referee, and the latter is the only person empowered to give decisions

10. **LAW X - METHOD OF SCORING**

10.1 Conform to **FIFA**.

11. **LAW XI – OFFSIDE**

    11.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

12. **LAW XII - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT**

    12.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

13. **LAW XIII - FREE KICKS**

    13.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

14. **LAW XIV – PENALTY KICKS**

    14.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

15. **LAW XV – THROW-IN**

    15.1. Conform to **FIFA**.

16. **LAW XVI – GOAL KICK**

    16.1 Conform to **FIFA**

17. **LAW XVII – CORNER KICK**

    17.1. Conform to **FIFA**

In the event that there are not enough registrations to form full 11v11 teams in an age group, the following will be put in place:

Teams will be formed to a maximum of 10 players.
The format will be 7v7 on the HOT 7v7 fields.
The game will consist of 2 20 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime.
There will be no offsides.
Goals cannot be scored from within the penalty area.

Heart of Texas Soccer Association

APPENDIX A – DISCIPLINE (NTSSA RULE 3.11)

All Member Associations are directed to distribute this rule to every youth and adult player, every coach, team manager, league administrator and referee. It is intended that the player and/or coach will make known the contents of this rule to his or her parents and spectators.

3.11.1 **Authority**

1. All members and participants in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of the North Texas State Soccer Association have requested to participate in our programs. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of **NTSSA**, their local playing association, as well as those of the United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations of which North Texas State Soccer Association is a member. The **NTSSA** Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws provide that it has jurisdiction over all Member Playing Associations, players, coaches, team managers, administrators, team representatives and referees who choose to affiliate. Any member or participant in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of **NTSSA** found in violation of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of **NTSSA**, their local member association, as well as those of the United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations of which North Texas State Soccer Association is a member, may be subject to publication in the monthly newsletter or **NTSSA** President's Newsletter of this association of their name, the type of violation, and the disciplinary action taken. Publication will be limited to individuals receiving disciplinary actions of three months or greater.

2. All Member Associations and /or Playing Leagues are directed to form their own Appeals and Disciplinary Committees and to hold hearings--**WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT**--on every player/coach/assistant coach/spectators and/or parents as required for serious misconduct. All Member Associations are required to furnish the State Office with a maintained up-to-date list of their A&D Chairman and Committee members and to include their addresses and phone numbers.

3. Should a recreational Playing League cover multiple Associations, the members of the Appeals and Discipline Committee for this league should be comprised of representatives from each available association represented. The **NTSSA** A&D Committee shall serve as the first level of appeal involving complaints from participants of differing Associations. If a Playing League is hosted by a primary Association, the Appeals and Discipline Committee may be comprised of members of that Association.

As guidance, if the issue at hand was as a result of play, the Playing League will handle the disciplinary matter. All other matters shall be directed to coach/individual/teams home Association.

3.11.2 **Misconduct of Youth Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches**

3.11.2.1. All Member Associations are directed to operate and keep records on a twelve (12) point "**CUMULATIVE TWELVE (**1**2) POINT SYSTEM"** for all player/coaches/assistant coaches. Offenses resulting in the cautioning of a player/coach/assistant coach by the referee (yellow are allowed points according to their seriousness ranging from one (1) to four (4) points. of cautions (yellow cards) are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in issuance of the caution. Points are cumulative during each soccer season. When a given player/coach/assistant coach accumulates twelve (12) points sanctions are applied as described. Member Associations, Playing leagues and Tournament Officials may institute their own "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for

players/coaches and assistant coaches or additional sanctions as they see appropriate. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the

issuance of the card. Sanctions for misconduct will remain within the competition where they are earned unless the violation happens in the last game of that competition and the Member Association/Player League or Tournament Officials deem that it is serious enough to forward to North Texas A & D for consideration of further sanctions.

3.11.2.2. **Yellow Cards** A player receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game and the next game within that competition.

3.11.2.3. **Red Cards** A player receiving a red card or a coach/assistant coach who is sent off is suspended for the balance of that game and the next game within that competition, or if in the last game of the competition, may be referred to North Texas for further sanctions. If a Member Association's and/or Playing League's A & D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the IFAB Laws of the Game, such A & D Committee may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Member Association North Texas State Soccer Association, Inc. 2023/2024 Bylaws and Rules Revised July 2023 Page | 33 or Playing League may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA.

NOTE: *In cases where, during a single game, an individual receives a yellow card followed by a "straight red card" (as opposed to a red card issued solely as a result of a second yellow) both cards will be added to such individual's respective total of league play red and yellow cards and punished accordingly. If a Member Association's and/or Playing League's A & D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the* ***FIFA*** *Laws of the Game, such A & D Committee may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Member Association or Playing League may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA****.***

A **"CUMULATIVE** CARD **SYSTEM"** for each tournament will be operated as follows:

a. **Yellow Cards** One game automatic suspension for the game following an individual'**s** third yellow card. Two game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's fifth yellow card of the tournament. One game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's sixth yellow card of the tournament.

NOTE: *A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game, and those two yellow cards are then added to such individual's previous total of yellow cards for that tournament to determine whether additional game suspensions, if any, are required. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second yellow in a single game will not be added to such individual's tournament play red card total.*

b. **Red Cards** One game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's first red card of the tournament. Automatic suspension, pending a hearing, from all NTSSA-sanctioned activities following such individual's second red card of the tournament. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second yellow card in a single game will not be added to such individual's tournament play red card total.

NOTE*: In cases where, during a single game, an individual receives a yellow card followed by a "straight red card" (as opposed to a red card issued solely as a result of a second yellow) both cards will be added to such individual's respective total of tournament play red and yellow cards and punished accordingly.*

If Tournament Officials determine a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the ***FIFA*** *Laws of the Game, such officials may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Tournament Officials may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA.*

c. **Seventh Card** Any individual obtaining a seventh card in tournament play shall be immediately suspended pending a hearing with NTSSA A&D Committee (meaning any combination of yellow and red cards totaling seven)

d. Exceptions *For misconduct cards issued during State Cup, Regionals, or National competitions (US Youth Soccer), the misconduct will be handled within that competition.*

The "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" prescribed by these rules defines the minimum disciplinary punishment to be taken by all Member Associations, Playing Leagues and Tournament Officials. Nothing herein prevents Member Associations, Playing Leagues or Tournament Officials from enacting more severe sanctions. Each case should be judged on its own set of circumstances and degree of misconduct or violence, the latter of which must be dealt with swiftly and severely.

Any misconduct by a Coach justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee as well as to the Member Association and/or Playing League with which the coach is affiliated. The Member Association and/or Playing League shall promptly (within seven (7) days after receipt of the report) rule on the report and send its decision to the State A&D Committee.

The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of the punishment, if any, in addition to that taken by the Member Association The State A&D Committee will make its decision based entirely upon the written reports before it, including that of the affected coach, should he or she submit a report. Hearings will not be held by the Committee unless it chooses to call one of its own volitions.

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

Game suspensions for Yellow and Red cards (as set forth above) are to be served by the player/coach/assistant coach at the next scheduled game (including league, playoff, championship, cup, and local or state tournament games) that such individual's team is involved in. A suspension imposed by these rules shall be recognized by all affiliated organizations after proper notification. The lack of a hearing or referee report on the offense shall not affect such an individual's suspension.

All game suspensions must be reported immediately to the State A&D Committee. The Member Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials making the report will forward a copy of any referee's Misconduct Report(s) which underlie the suspension. The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of punishment, if any, in addition to that prescribed by the Member Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials, taking into consideration the severity of the misconduct.

The State A&D Committee will issue its decision based entirely upon the officials' reports and any other written reports before it, including that of the affected individual, should he or she submit a report. A hearing will not be held by the State A&D Committee unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one because of the nature of the case.

Rule 3.11.3 (3). A player transferring to another team will carry over his or her accumulated points to his or her new team. Reports of these disciplinary actions are to be sent to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee at North Texas State Soccer Association Office.

3.11.2.4 **EXTREME VIOLENT CONDUCT**

A. Member Associations, Playing Leagues and/or Tournament Officials are directed to extend severe punishment to those players, coaches, and assistant coaches guilty of extreme violent conduct while participating in a match and for violence toward any person or property after being ejected, while on the touchline, or approaching or leaving the game site.

3.11.3 **Misconduct of Adult Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches**

3.11.3.1 Member Associations, Playing leagues, and Tournament Officials shall institute their own "MISCONDUCT SYSTEM" for players/coaches and assistant coaches for sanctions as the see appropriate. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card. Sanctions for misconduct will remain within the competition where they are earned unless violation happens on the last game of that competition and the Member Association, Player League, or Tournament Officials deem that it is serious enough to forward to North Texas Soccer A&D for consideration of further sanctions.

1. A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game, and shall sit out the following game.
2. A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a red card is suspended for the balance of that game, and shall sit out a minimum of the following game. NOTE: If the Member Association A&D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the IFAB Laws of the Game, the Member Association may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess points for the yellow card. The Member Association may not, however, do away with the card altogether

3.11.3.2 All Member Associations are directed to operate and keep records on a twelve (12) point "**CUMULATIVE TWELVE (12) POINT SYSTEM"** for all player/coaches/assistant coaches. Offenses resulting in the cautioning of a player/coach/assistant coach by the referee (yellow are allowed points according to their seriousness ranging from one (1) to four (4) points. of cautions (yellow cards) are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in issuance of the caution. Points are cumulative during each soccer season. When a given player/coach/assistant coach accumulates twelve (12) points sanctions are applied as described. Member Associations, Playing leagues and Tournament Officials may institute their own "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for players/coaches and assistant coaches or additional sanctions as they see appropriate. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card. Sanctions for misconduct will remain within the competition where they are earned unless the violation happens in the last game of that competition and the Member Association/Player League or Tournament Officials deem that it is serious enough to forward to North Texas A & D for consideration of further sanctions.

The points of the **"CUMULATIVE TWELVE (12) POINT SYSTEM"** will be allocated as follows:

a. **12 points** Sent off from game due to Serious Foul Play, Violent Conduct, Spitting at Opponent/Person, Denies Goal Scoring Opportunity or Offensive, Insulting or Abusive Language

For ejection from a game due to misconduct after receiving a caution, except for twelve (12) point offenses as stated above, points will be based on two (2) cautions.

***NOTE**: If the Member Association A&D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the **FIFA** Laws of the Game, the Member Association may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess points for the yellow card. The Member*

*Association may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to **NTSSA**.*

1. The **CAUTION** points are to be allocated as follows:
    - **a. FOUR POINTS**
        1. Deliberate tripping, tripping and other "tactical", deliberate, physical fouls.
        2. Foul tackle from behind.
        3. Interference by other players when the referee is speaking to a player after an offense has been committed.
        4. Continued dissent of a decision in an attempt to unsettle the referee.
    - **b. THREE POINTS**
        1. Deliberate, tactical obstruction.
        2. Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game.
        3. Shirt pulling and other similar tactics.
        4. Deliberate encroachment at free-kicks.
    - **c. TWO POINTS**
        1. Deliberate handball designed to break up attack.
        2. Time wasting, including that by the goalkeeper.
        3. Moving arms up and down to obstruct an opponent.
        4. Gesticulating in front of a player taking a free-kick or thrown-in.
        5. Fails to respect required distance or unsporting behavior at a penalty kick.
        6. Other unsporting behavior.
    - **d. ONE POINT**
        1. Entering or leaving the field without the referee's permission.
        2. Player leaning on a teammate to gain an extra height.
        3. Pulling oneself up by the goal post or crossbar to gain an advantage.

2. **ACCUMULATED CAUTION POINTS SANCTIONS**
    a. Twelve (12) Accumulated Caution Points - One Game Suspension
    b. Six (6) More Points - Two Game Suspension
    c. Six (6) More Points - Suspension pending A&D - Committee Inquiry

3. **SEND-OFF**
    a. One Send-off - One Game Suspension
    b. Second Send-off - Two Game Suspension
    c. Third Send-off - Suspension pending A&D - Committee Inquiry

4. **FINES**
    a. Teams Exceeding The Accumulated Point Limit - $50
    b. Teams Exceeding The Accumulated Point Limit Second Time in Soccer Year - $100

***NOTE**: All fines must be paid within thirty (30) days of infraction to the North Texas State Soccer Association.*

***NOTE:** This is the **minimum** disciplinary punishment taken by all Member Associations on ejections. Nothing herein prevents a Member Association from enacting more severe sanctions. Each case should be judged on its own set of circumstances and degree of misconduct or violence, the latter of which must be dealt with swiftly and severely.*

When an ejection or game suspension under the caution point system is issued to a player, the Member Association or league to which the player is affiliated will forward a copy of the referee's Misconduct Report of the ejection or a copy of the league's Disciplinary Committee report on suspension due to the excessive Caution Points directly to the **NTSSA State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee**, together with

the action taken by the Member Association. The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of punishment, if any, in addition to that prescribed by the Member Association, taking into consideration the severity of the misconduct. Each additional caution and/or ejection of said player during the remainder of the soccer year will also be forwarded to the Committee for review and possible further action.

Any misconduct by a Coach justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee as well as the Member Association with which the coach is affiliated. The Member Association shall promptly (within five (5) days after receipt of the report) rule on the report and send its decision to the State A&D Committee.

The State Committee will determine the extent of the punishment, if any, in addition to that taken by the Member Association. The State A&D Committee will make its decision based entirely upon the written reports before it, including that of the affected coach, should he or she submit a report. Hearings will not be held by the Committee unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one.

A coach whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to his or her players, parents and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the A&D Committee of both the Member Association involved and the **NTSSA**, and is subject to elevation to the State A&D committee should NTSSA find this necessary.

Game suspensions for Yellow and Red cards (as set forth above) are to be served by the player/coach/assistant coach at the next scheduled game (including league, playoff, championship, cup, and local or state tournament games) that such individual's team is involved in. A suspension imposed by these rules shall be recognized by all affiliated organizations after proper notification. The lack of a hearing or referee report on the offense shall not affect such an individual's suspension.

A suspension imposed by **NTSSA** shall be recognized by all affiliated organizations after proper notification. The lack of a hearing or referee report on the suspension/expulsion of the offender shall not nullify his suspension (to sit out) the next game.

All game suspensions must be reported immediately to the State A&D committee. The member Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials making the report will forward a copy of any referee's Misconduct Report (s) which underlie the suspension. The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of punishment, if any, in addition to that prescribed by the Member Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials, taking into consideration the severity of the misconduct.

3.11.4 **Misconduct of Spectators**

It is the official policy of HOTSA that the game officials (referees and/or assistant referees), field marshals, and/or any other person designated by the HOTSA Board of Directors to monitor field activity will not tolerate spectator misconduct in any form, be it vocal or physical, towards any player, coach, game official, field marshal, or HOTSA Board designate.

3.11.4.1 Each team (youth and adult) in NTSSA is responsible for the conduct of its spectators. The referee has the authority to insist that the coach or acting coach deal with the misconduct of the spectators and resolve the problem. Failure to do so may result in the coach's dismissal from the field and/or termination of the match. Therefore, the coach/assistant coach/team manager is expected to control his spectators, especially on non-enclosed fields. If he is unable to do so, Member Associations, Playing Leagues and/or Tournament Officials are directed to take appropriate actions toward the identifiable, unruly spectator, or if unidentifiable, towards the team itself. Member Associations, Playing Leagues and Tournament Officials shall report spectator misconduct to the NTSSA A&D Committee for review and further action if warranted.

Suggested action for misconduct of spectators is:

a. Suspend the spectator from attending future matches.
b. Report spectator to the local Parks & Recreation Department.
c. Require team to forfeit any games at which the spectator is present on the sideline (cannot keep them off of public street or out of parking lot

d. Require offending team to pay for presence of police at the game
e. Revoke and/or refuse registration to the offending team.
f. Cause the spectator to be placed under a municipal "peace bond".

3.11.5 **Misconduct and Punishment of Teams**

1. **Youth Association Teams**
    a. When, during the current soccer year, the players/coaches/assistant coaches of a given team have accumulated a total of seven (7) send-offs in league play (including red cards issued as a result of an individual receiving two yellow cards in a single game) or any combination of cards totaling twenty-five (25) the Member Association and/or Playing League shall notify the team and the State A & D Committee. The team will be fined $100 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the seventh send- off or any combination of cards totaling twenty-five (25). The coach and the players of said team may also be required to appear before the committee to explain the team's continued misconduct. Failure of the Member Association or Playing League to notify the State A&D Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of a team's seventh send-off or any combination of cards totaling twenty-five (25) will result in a fine of $100 per week for each week such notice is late. Red cards or send-offs assessed against that team's spectators or against that team during tournament play will be reviewed to ascertain team misconduct tendencies.
    b. When the players/coaches/assistant coaches of a given team have accumulated a total of four (4) send-offs in a tournament (including red cards issued as a result of an individual receiving two yellow cards in a single game) Tournament Officials shall notify the team and the State A & D Committee. The team will be fined $100 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the fourth send-off. The coach and the players of said team may also be required to appear before the committee to explain the team's continued misconduct. Failure of Tournament Officials to notify the State A&D Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of a team's fourth will result in a fine of $100 per week for each week such notice is late. Red Cards or send-offs assessed against that team's spectators or against that team during league play will be reviewed to ascertain team misconduct tendencies.

2. **Adult Association Teams**

    a. When the players/coaches/team representatives/spectators of a given team have accumulated a combined point limit for that team, based on five (5) points per scheduled league game, per season, as described in the **"CUMULATIVE TWELVE (12) POINT SYSTEM"** in Rule 3.11.3, the Adult Member Association will notify the North Texas State Soccer Association Appeals & Disciplinary Committee. (Example: For a ten (10) game season, the combined point limit will be fifty (50) points.) The team will be required to appear before the **NTSSA** Appeals & Disciplinary Committee to explain the team's continued misconduct.
    b. The North Texas State Soccer Association will not hesitate to deny teams, coaches, managers, team representatives or players within its jurisdiction, the privilege of further participation in all or selected soccer activities within its jurisdiction for repeated offenses and for serious offenses considered to bring the game into disrepute. A probation period and/or other sanctions may be rendered to teams, coaches, managers, team representatives or players for violation of this rule.

3. **All Association Teams**

a. The **NTSSA** holds the team and coach jointly responsible for the conduct of his or her players, parents, and spectators.

b. A coach whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to his or her players, parents and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the A&D Committee of both the Member Association involved and the **NTSSA**.

3.11.5 **Games Directly Sponsored by NTSSA**

Misconduct involving any participant (player, coach, parent/spectator) of State-sponsored games, as opposed to Member Association league play, will be reported directly to the Tournament Officials of the State Cup and Games Committee and will be forwarded to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee immediately after the occurrence for appropriate disciplinary action.

3.11.6 **Misconduct Toward Referee**

1. North Texas State Soccer Association has exclusive jurisdiction over assault or abuse of officials, both referee and assistant referee, in any competition by the State or Member Associations. This jurisdiction includes:

a. All **USSF** registered referees (adult and youth). b. Any non-licensed person serving in any emergency capacity as a game official. c. Any coach, parent or junior assistant referee, serving as a game official.

2. If there is an assault/abuse of any game official by any person, including players, coaches, managers or spectators; a report of the alleged assault/abuse will be submitted immediately to the NTSSA A&D Committee Chairman, the appropriate State Commissioner (Adult Men's, Adult Women's, Youth or Indoor), the Olympic Development Program Chairman and the Chairman of the State Referee Committee. This subcommittee, chaired by the NTSSA A&D Committee Chairman, shall review and investigate the report(s) as submitted, and upon proper investigation shall determine the seriousness of the alleged assault/abuse report(s) in a timely manner.

3. Should the majority of the members of the subcommittee listed above (Paragraph 3.11.6.2) determine there is sufficient evidence to consider the incident referee assault or referee abuse, a formal hearing will be held within thirty (30) days of verification of the incident. An intentional act upon or towards a game official as defined in Paragraph 3.11.6.1 above shall be deemed "referee assault" or "referee abuse" in the **NTSSA** under the terms, references, and conditions of **USSF** Policy 531-9. If the subcommittee determines there is sufficient evidence to consider the incident referee assault, the committee, at its discretion, may suspend the individual involved until the hearing on the alleged assault.

4. Should the subcommittee, as noted in Paragraph 3.11.6.2, determine the action committed to be Misconduct Towards a Referee rather than Referee Assault or Referee Abuse, it shall impose an administrative punishment of a three (3) game suspension. A formal hearing will not be held unless it is requested by the suspended party. Should a formal hearing be requested and held, it shall be an NTSSA Executive Committee hearing as described in Paragraph 3.11.6.3.

5. State Executive Committee Hearing

Assault hearings shall be conducted by the State Executive Committee in the following manner:

a. The alleged offending party should be present at such hearings, however, if he is not present, the State Executive Committee will act upon the matter with the information before it.

b. The game official(s) are required to be present at the hearings. However, if they are not present, the State Executive Committee will act upon the matter with the information before it.

c. It is intended that the officials' reports be clear and that no explanations are required at the hearing. Only the State Executive Committee will question the official(s). If the offending party or any other party or any other person(s) need explanation, such queries will be addressed through the Chair.

6. Terms and References

Referee Assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee (an act intended to bring about a result that will invade the interests of another in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.). 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.

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. 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.

Misconduct towards a referee means persistent statements or physical acts directed toward a referee during or after a game, that do not constitute referee assault or abuse as provided under Federation Policy 531-9, but that mistreat the referee or are inappropriate or unacceptable statements or acts, and may include the following:

i. excessive incidences of foul or abusive language at the referee;
ii. statements that diminish the authority of the referee;
iii. statements or acts that serve to intimidate without threatening physical harm to the referee.
iv. Examples of misconduct that arise under the description above include the following:
1. confronting the referee without physically threatening the referee;
2. spitting on the ground or in the air but not at the referee;
3. throwing or kicking an item as a sign of disrespect or dissent but without the chance of hitting the referee;
4. re-entering the field.

These are only some of the examples of possible misconduct and are not all-inclusive, but apply only in the following situations:

i. if a proceeding is brought against an individual for referee assault or abuse, or both, under Federation Policy 531-9; or
ii. if the individual is ejected from a game and, after the ejection, engages in conduct that is misconduct under this policy.

7. Penalties and Suspensions

a. <u>Referee Assualt</u>

The Person committing the 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 (3) months from the time of the assault;
2. except as provided in clause one (1) or two (2), for any other assault, at least six (6) months from the time of the assault;
3. for an assault committed by an adult and the referee is seventeen (17)years of age or younger, at least three (3) years; or
4. for an assault when serious injuries are inflicted, at least five (5) years.

b. Referee Abuse
The person committing the referee abuse shall be suspended for a minimum of three (3) games.

c. Misconduct Toward a Referee
The person committing the misconduct towards a referee shall be suspended for a minimum of three (3) games.

d. Any suspension assessed against an individual under this section does not affect any other suspension and/or fine that may be imposed on the individual by an association or league for a violation that is not referee assault or abuse.

8. Any party found to have committed the act of referee assault, referee abuse, or misconduct towards a referee shall have the right to appeal, within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision, to the **USSF** Appeals Board, following **USSF** Bylaw 705.

9. Assault On Officials By An Adult Player

Should a player (male or female) be found guilty of referee assault, the State Executive Committee may, at its discretion, impose upon the team of which the player is a member, the requirement of posting a $1,000 cash bond to be held in the treasury of **NTSSA** without interest for a period of one (1) year after posting. This cash bond will be required to be posted before the team may engage in any further games within the boundaries of **NTSSA**. Should any other member of said team be found guilty of a referee assault during that one (1) year period, the team shall forfeit the bond, and another similar bond will be required before the team can continue in competition. If no member of the team commits a referee assault during that one (1) year period, the bond will be returned to the person or persons designated to receive such payment. No member of such team which has failed to post such bond will be permitted to register with another team until that member has posted a $50 bond with **NTSSA**; nor shall any new member be allowed to register on that team until such member has posted a $50 bond, such bonds to be held under the same terms and conditions as the team bonds.

3.11.7 **Misconduct of Referees** When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward any participant, spectator of a match or toward another referee, the State A&D Committee will hear such allegations and assess punishment concerning the Referee in regard to his activities. **3.11.9 Appellate Procedures**

1. All those under the jurisdiction of **NTSSA** are reminded that they must exhaust all appellate procedures of the Member Association on all matters not covered by these Rules before the State Association can acquire jurisdiction to hear the appeal under its rules.

2. Member Associations are reminded that they may set the rules of hearings and may restrict the number of witnesses, and the time allotted to each, so long as fair hearings are held. It may also determine whether it wants to allow closed or open hearings.

3. Member Associations and their committees are urged to refuse to hear any appeal when any person is threatening a lawsuit. You should pass the appeal to the next higher forum which would hear it. This is a sport to which we are giving freely of our time, and none of us needs to take the trouble and expense to appear in court.

4. To allow the use of tape recorders, court reporters and the presence of attorneys at hearings is optional with the Member Association.

NTSSA will refuse to allow such recording devices, and the presence of attorneys at hearings is optional with the Member Associations.

5. Should any aggrieved party resort to the courts without exhausting all avenues of appeal including through to the **USSF**, the State Association may, at its discretion, suspend such person or refuse to accept further registration in soccer activities within its jurisdiction.

6. An appeal of decisions pursuant to Rule 3.11 made by Member Associations, after Member Association's appeal procedures have been exhausted, will be made to the State A&D Committee in accordance with procedures established by this section.

7. An appeal of decisions made by the State A&D Committee will be made to the State Executive Committee in accordance with procedures established in this section.

8. An appeal of decisions presented to the **NTSSA** will be:
    a. In writing.
    b. Made to the General Manager of NTSSA within five (5) days of written receipt of the lower-level authority's decision(s).
    c. Fees, as specified, will be in cash or certified check and will accompany the written notice of appeal.

9. Filing fees for appeals will, under no circumstances, be waived.
   Fees will be refunded to the appealing party only if the previous decision is overruled. Fees will be:
    a. All Player Appeals- $50 - ($25 paid by the player and $25 paid by the coach)
    b. All Coach Appeals & Referee Appeals - $100
    c. All Team Appeals - $100