

BYLAWS

OF THE



**MARYLAND STATE SOCCER
ASSOCIATION**

Founded 1924

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	NAME	1
II.	OBJECTIVES	1
III.	COLORS	1
IV.	AFFILIATION	1
V.	MEMBERSHIP	1
VI.	AFFILIATION RESPONSIBILITIES	2
VII.	THE COUNCIL AND ITS POWER	3
VIII.	OFFICERS AND DUTIES	4
IX.	ELECTIONS	6
X.	COMMITTEES	6
XI.	MEETINGS	7
XII.	AMENDMENTS	7
XIII.	QUORUM	8
XIV.	ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR MEETINGS	8
XV.	SUSPENSIONS	8
XVI.	APPEALS	9

BYLAWS OF THE MARYLAND STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION

I. NAME

The name of this Association shall be the MARYLAND STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION (MSSA). The MSSA was found in 1924 and incorporated in the State of Maryland in 1983 as a not-for-profit, non-stock organization.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives and purposes of the MSSA shall be to promote and foster soccer in Maryland and to resolve questions and controversies not precisely covered by the rules of the affiliated leagues and clubs of the MSSA.

III. COLORS

The representative colors of the MSSA shall be those colors present on the Maryland State Flag: Gold, Black, Red and White.

IV. AFFILIATION

- A. The MSSA shall be affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation and the United States Adult Soccer Association (USASA) as the sole, member State Association representing adult soccer in the State of Maryland. Such membership makes the MSSA a member of the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). The bylaws, policies and requirements set forth by these organizations are applicable to the MSSA and its members, take precedence over and supersede the governing documents and decisions of the MSSA and its members to the extent applicable under state law, and shall be abided in order for the MSSA to be in good standing. The MSSA shall at all times recognize the authority, rulings and laws of those bodies.
- B. The MSSA may be a member of other organizations at the discretion of the Council as long as the requirements of such organizations do not conflict with the requirements of the USSF or USASA.

V. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The membership of the MSSA is open to all soccer organizations and all soccer players, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators and officials without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex or national origin.

- B. The jurisdiction of the MSSA shall encompass all adult soccer played in the State of Maryland.
- C. Any league or association composed of clubs/teams operating soccer matches in the State of Maryland according to the Laws of the Game may become members.
- D. Leagues, upon acceptance as members, shall be furnished with a copy of these bylaws so that they are aware of their responsibilities.
- E. Leagues affiliating with the MSSA that cross other jurisdictions may either admit teams from outside the jurisdiction of the MSSA, provided such teams are in good standing and have obtained the permission from their home State Association or may become members of those other State Associations as well. The actual number of players registered with MSSA will determine the voting strength of such leagues.
- F. Individual clubs or teams playing soccer in the State of Maryland may become members of the MSSA. There may limitations on those clubs in entering sanctioned competitions under the auspices of the MSSA, the USASA or the USSF.
- G. Members of affiliated leagues may play in any league or tournament outside the jurisdiction of the MSSA only upon requesting and obtaining permission to do so from the MSSA. The request must be in writing and provided to the Secretary of the MSSA.
- H. Soccer related bodies operating in the State of Maryland, such as the Old Timers Soccer Association of Maryland and referee or coaching organizations, may become honorary members of the MSSA.
- I. Life Members – The MSSA may grant through its Council a Life Membership to an individual who has given outstanding service to the MSSA.

VI. AFFILIATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Members must submit a copy of their bylaws, the names and contact information of its officers and the location of its headquarters upon affiliation with the MSSA and are required to keep MSSA updated of any changes. Leagues shall also provide the names of its teams and the contact information of its managers.
- B. The annual affiliation fee for membership shall be set by the Council and published as policies of the MSSA. Affiliation fees also include those fees set forth by the USSF and USASA for membership into their organizations.
- C. No member shall have representation on the Council until the current annual fees have been paid.

VII. THE COUNCIL AND ITS POWER

- A. The Council shall conduct the business of the MSSA.
- B. The Council shall be composed of the following:
 - 1. The elected officers of the MSSA: the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary;
 - 2. The elected Delegates-at-Large of the MSSA;
 - 3. Past Presidents of the MSSA;
 - 4. Delegates from member leagues;
 - 5. Delegates representing honorary members duly elected by said bodies; and
 - 6. Life Members.
- C. The following shall be entitled to vote on all matters presented before the Council at any meeting of the MSSA:
 - 1. The elected officers of the MSSA;
 - 2. The elected Delegates-at-Large of the MSSA;
 - 3. The immediate Past President of the MSSA;
 - 4. Delegates representing member leagues; and
 - 5. Life Members.
- D. Votes may be cast only by those entitled to a vote present at a meeting of the MSSA. Proxy votes are prohibited. The votes entitled to a member league may be cast by a single delegate or by a group of delegates representing the league. Officers, Delegates-at-Large, Past Presidents and Lifetime Members who exercise their vote as privilege of their position may not cast votes as a representative of a member league. The President shall be allowed to cast a vote on matters only in cases of a tied ballot.
- E. The following shall determine the votes allocated to member leagues and honorary members:
 - 1. Leagues are entitled to votes on the basis of the number of players registered during the seasonal year (September to August). A league member shall be entitled to the following number of votes:
 - a. 0 to 43 players: 0 votes
 - b. 44 to 100 players: 1 vote
 - c. 101 to 250 players: 2 votes
 - d. 251 to 400 players: 3 votes
 - e. 401 to 550 players: 4 votes
 - f. 551 players or more: 5 votes
 - 2. Honorary members are entitled to a voice on the council.

- F. At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the MSSA the Council shall elect the officers and Delegates-at-Large of the MSSA. Only delegates representing member leagues entitled to vote and Life Members shall cast ballots to elect new officers and Delegates-at-Large. Officers and Delegates-at-Large are not entitled to vote in their capacity but may vote as a delegate representing a member league.

- G. The Council shall have the power to:
 - 1. enforce the laws of the game and rulings of the USSF or any affiliated body;
 - 2. settle appeals from the decisions of affiliated subordinate organizations including MSSA Committees;
 - 3. declare vacant the office of any Officer, Delegate at-Large, Delegate from any league or affiliated organization when that person shall without cause absent himself from three consecutive meetings;
 - 4. represent the MSSA in all matters of a foreign nature and deal with questions brought to it subject only to the actions of the USSF;
 - 5. with good cause, call upon any league, team, club, player or individual to produce books, letters, documents or any evidence they may desire;
 - 6. suspend any league, team, club player or game official guilty of violating the rules or for misconduct for a stated period;
 - 7. deal with in any manner deemed proper, any league, team, club, player or individual competing while under suspension;
 - 8. create subcommittees with power to act; and
 - 9. elect individuals to fill vacated council positions.

VIII. OFFICERS AND DUTIES

- A. The President shall:
 - 1. preside at all meetings and be Ex-Officio member of all standing committees;
 - 2. be Chairperson of the Executive Committee;
 - 3. appoint all committees not required to be elected;
 - 4. appoint a State Referee Administrator and members of the State Referee Committee jointly with the President of the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association;
 - 5. appoint the State Coaches;
 - 6. cast the deciding ballot in the case of a tie vote at any meeting of the MSSA or the Executive Committee; and
 - 7. be elected at the AGM for a duration of two (2) successive AGM cycles, in even numbered years.

B. The Vice President shall:

1. assist the President in the performance of the President's duties;
2. exercise the powers of the president in his absence;
3. be Chairman of the Rules and Regulations Committee;
4. be a member of the Executive Committee;
5. be entitled to one vote; and
6. be elected at the AGM for a duration of two (2) successive AGM cycles, in odd numbered years.

C. The Treasurer shall:

1. have charge of and receive the moneys of the MSSA and shall keep a detailed account of the income and expenditures thereof;
2. deposit in the MSSA account the receipts of the MSSA;
3. submit a statement of the condition of the finances upon request;
4. submit a full report at the end of the seasonal year of the financial transactions of the MSSA, accompanied by a statement of the balance on hand to be turned over to the Auditing Committee;
5. approve all invoices when presented upon the funds of the MSSA after approval by the President;
6. be a member of the Executive Committee;
7. be entitled to one vote; and
8. be elected at the AGM for a duration of two (2) successive AGM cycles, in even numbered years.

D. The Secretary shall:

1. keep a record of the minutes of all meetings;
2. conduct all correspondence;
3. notify all affiliated bodies or members of meetings, stating if the business is regular or special and if the latter, the nature of the business;
4. at the request of the President call a special meeting at any time;
5. notify leagues and members of meetings at least 15 days in advance;
6. attend and record the minutes of all committees and handle correspondence for same;
7. be a member of the Executive Committee;
8. be entitled to one vote; and
9. be elected at the AGM for a duration of two (2) successive AGM cycles, in odd numbered years.

- E. Delegates-at-Large: The Council shall elect six individuals to serve as Delegates-at-Large. Three (3) Delegates-at-Large shall be elected at the AGM for a duration of two (2) successive AGM cycles, in even numbered years, and three (3) Delegates-at-Large shall be elected at the AGM for a duration of two (2) successive AGM cycles, in odd numbered years. As members of the Council, each Delegate-at-Large is entitled to one vote.
- F. Past Presidents shall be members of the Council having voice. The immediate Past President shall have voice and vote.
- G. At all meetings conducted by the USSF and the USASA, or their subordinate organizations, the MSSA will make all attempts to send the appropriate number of delegates entitled to votes to those meetings and at least one alternate delegate. If only one individual is able to attend any such meeting, that individual shall be entitled to cast all the votes eligible to the MSSA at such a meeting.

IX. ELECTIONS

The Officers and Delegates-at-Large shall be elected by a majority vote of those Council members present and entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting of the Maryland State Soccer Association.

X. COMMITTEES

- A. The Executive Committee, composed of the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, shall have the following authority:
 - 1. represent the General Council of the MSSA in all matters that require immediate attention wherein it is impossible to call a meeting of the Council;
 - 2. review the bylaws of leagues applying for membership to the MSSA and make recommendations to the Council for membership;
 - 3. review and recommend the acceptance or denial of proposed amendments to the bylaws of the MSSA;
 - 4. have their decisions or opinions be subject to the approval of the General Council of the MSSA.
- B. The Finance Committee, composed of three members including the Treasurer, shall meet not later than one month after the end of the seasonal year to audit the books of the Treasurer and the Secretary's account. They shall submit a written report at the AGM. They shall submit a budget at the beginning of the new seasonal year, outlining the probable Income and Expenses for the ensuing season. Any legitimate expenses incurred in the transaction of the duties of this Committee shall be defrayed by the MSSA.

- C. The Cups Committee shall conduct the annual Cup Competitions of the USSF, USASA and the MSSA in conformance with established rules for such competitions. This Committee in addition to conducting the Competitions shall adjudicate and arbitrate all protests in these competitions.
- D. The Rules and Regulations Committee, consisting of three members shall review the existing MSSA Constitution, bylaws and Rules to make proper the prospect of strengthening the existing Bylaws and Rules.
- E. All Committee reports must be made in writing. A progress report by the Chairman of any such designated committee shall be made available to the Secretary before start of each scheduled meeting.
- F. An annual report of all committees so designated shall be made in writing, 14 days prior to the Secretary for the express purposes of accrediting growth and/or decline in the MSSA. These reports shall be comprehensive in their material content.

XI. MEETINGS

- A. The Council shall meet at least once annually for the Annual General Meeting. Notice of a meeting shall be sent at least 15 days prior to the meeting and a copy of the agenda shall be attached with the notice.
- B. The Secretary, upon the request of the President or upon the request of a majority of the members of the Council, may call a special general meeting at any time. A seventy-two hour notice by phone must be given to the members stating the Agenda for that meeting.
- C. The courtesy of the meeting may be extended to interested parties at the discretion of the Council. This courtesy does not provide voice or vote.
- D. A majority vote shall decide all issues brought before the Council except changes to the bylaws.

XII. AMENDMENTS

- A. Any amendments to these bylaws require a two-thirds vote for approval by those Council members present to vote on such amendments at a scheduled meeting of the MSSA.
- B. Any new amendment proposal must be submitted to the Rules and Regulations

Committee and must be accompanied by a statement of purpose for the proposed change. The amendment proposal shall be presented to the Council at the next scheduled meeting of the MSSA and shall be voted upon at the subsequent meeting.

XIII. QUORUM

Seven members shall constitute a Quorum at all Council meetings.

XIV. ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR MEETINGS

The following shall be the order of business for all meetings of the MSSA:

- A. Roll Call
- B. Minutes of previous meeting
- C. Treasurer's Report
- D. President's Report
- E. Unfinished Business
- F. Reports of Committees
- G. Delegates' Reports
- H. Referees' Report
- I. New Business
- J. Elections (if necessary)
- K. Good of Soccer
- L. Adjournment

XV. SUSPENSIONS

- A. The MSSA shall recognize the suspensions of all co-equal bodies of which the MSSA has been officially informed. All such suspensions and rulings must have the approval of the USSF, pending action by the USSF, the suspensions and rulings are in force.
- B. Suspended players, leagues, teams, clubs or other individual shall not be eligible for membership in any organization affiliated with the MSSA or the USSF.
- C. Members of the MSSA shall send notice to the Secretary of decisions to suspend players or individuals from participation of matches for a period extending more than 5 matches. In such cases, the individuals involved must have been given an opportunity to have a hearing that follows the disciplinary hearing procedures set forth under MSSA policies and USSF guidelines. If the individuals were not given such opportunity to have a hearing within a reasonable period time, the MSSA will convene a disciplinary hearing board to determine whether the individual shall be suspended for any longer period.
- D. In cases involving allegation of misconduct towards game officials, the MSSA will

convene a disciplinary hearing within 30 days of the verification of the allegation as prescribed under USSF policy. The accused individual is automatically suspended until the hearing is concluded. A Disciplinary Hearing Board, appointed from members of the MSSA, shall conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with USSF policy. At minimum, the Board shall be composed of three members of which at least one is a member of the MSSA Council. One of the Board members shall chair the hearing. If the Board determines that misconduct occurred, the individual is suspended from any affiliated soccer activities for the period prescribed in accordance with USSF policy.

- E. Notice of suspensions will be communicated to all individuals and teams so affected.

XVI. APPEALS

- A. All decisions rendered by member leagues of the MSSA relating to soccer related activities may be appealed to the MSSA. A Hearing Board, appointed from members of the MSSA Council, shall conduct the appeal. At minimum, the Board shall compose of three members and will not involve anyone associated with the member league rendering the original decision. One of the Board members shall chair the hearing.
- B. All appeals must be submitted within 14 days from the date of the official receipt of the decision taken by the member league, shall be in writing, mailed to the Secretary and accompanied by a fee of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00). A copy of the appeal shall also be sent to the member league rendering the original decision. If the appeal is decided in the favor of the appellant, then the fee shall be returned to the appellant.
- C. All decisions rendered by the MSSA may be appealed to the USASA or the USSF and should follow the procedures set by those bodies.
- D. Members, officials, administrators, players, coaches or referees will not invoke the use of federal or state courts to settle disputes without first exhausting all administrative remedies available within the MSSA, the USASA or the USSF.

These bylaws were amended and adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Maryland State Soccer Association held on 10 August 2013, in Washington, DC.