

# Area 5C Area Guidelines

## Purpose

The purpose of these Guidelines is to regulate the affairs of this Area. These Guidelines are subject to the National By-laws of the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), the Articles of Incorporation of AYSO, the AYSO National and Section Rules and Regulations, and the Policies adopted from time to time by the AYSO National Board of Directors (collectively, the “National Regulations”), copies of which (except for the Articles of Incorporation) will be made available by the Area on request and are hereby incorporated by reference.

## Area Mission

The mission of AYSO Area 5C is to deliver the best youth soccer program in our playing area through the execution of AYSO’s philosophies. We will achieve this mission through quality coach and referee training that meets or exceeds national AYSO standards. By having the best trained volunteers, we can provide the best program for the youth of our Area!

## Regions Represented in Area 5C

Region 160- Huntsville

Region 498- Madison

Region 557- Fayetteville

Region 894- Monrovia/Harvest

Region 914- East Limestone/Athens

Region 1096- Killen

Region 1174- New Market/Hazel Green/ Meridianville

Region 8024-Tuscaloosa EPIC

## Area Duties and Responsibilities

1. Coordinate training & play for inter-regional programs and tournament play.
2. Develops annual Area goals and objectives.
3. Assist in the creation and development of new Regions and the consolidation or elimination of existing Regions as needed.
4. Conducts an on-going assessment of the requirements of regional and area programs, and as appropriate, assesses area requirements pertaining to the number and size of regions within the area.
5. Coordinate the training of coaches and referees within the Area to maximize the use of available resources and ensure that all coaches and referees have received appropriate training consistent with established AYSO programs.

6. Develop a planning calendar and calendar of events of Area activities to be disseminated to Region, Area, and Section volunteers as appropriate.
7. Create Area budgets based upon Section, Area & Regional goals.
8. Coordinate inter-regional play including tournaments.
9. Settle disputes as required.

## Area Membership and Area Board

**Executive Members-** All regional commissioners and the Area Director

**Participating Members-** All AYSO volunteers and players that have registered in the current membership year.

The Area 5C Board shall consist of the Executive Members and Area Staff Members. The Executive Members are the Area Director and Regional Commissioners which constitute the voting members of the Board.

### **AYSO Area 5C Board Roles**

Area Director

Regional Commissioners

### **Area Staff Board Roles**

Area Coach Admin-

Area Director of Coach Instruction- **Simon King**

Area Ref Admin- **Greg Duke**

Area Director of Referee Instruction- **Gary Doran**

Area Director of Referee Assessment- **Simon King**

Area Safety Director- **David Lunsford**

Area Treasurer- **Jennifer Hoffman-Little**

Area CVPA

Area Management Trainer- **Jason Lanier**

Area Tournament Director-

Area Systems Admin-

Area Alliance Director- **David Kelley**

## Area Management Guidelines

1. The Area Board shall conduct the business and affairs of the Area.
2. Unless otherwise specifically provided by these Guidelines, all decisions of the Area Board shall be made by a majority decision of the area regional commissioners voting on any such matter; provided, however, that the Area Director may veto any such decision if the effect of such decision would be to violate any of the National Regulations. Such veto may be reviewed by the Section Director on request by a two-thirds vote of the board members voting on such matter. Each region shall be allowed one (1) vote. A simple majority shall carry any vote by the Area 5C Executive Members. Area board members who are not currently regional commissioners shall not vote but shall provide input in the discussions on topic and provide feedback and recommendations.
3. Meetings shall be set at the discretion of the Area Director as often as needed to ensure proper operation of the Area.
  - a. The Regional Commissioner may designate a region representative. The designated region representative may cast a substitute vote in the absence of a voting member except for election of Area Director.
4. Whenever there is a vacancy in the position of the Area Director, the Area Board, including the outgoing Area Director, shall recommend a successor via the process and procedure laid out by AYSO National policy.
5. No Board Member or any other participant in this Area shall receive monetary or other compensation for his/her services to the Area, nor may he/she use his/her position to benefit him/her directly or indirectly in any other way, such as a supplier of equipment or camp programs to this Area. The exception to this shall be through referee payment policy when performing the role of referee.
6. Any vacancy on the Area Board shall normally be filled by appointment of the Area Director for all positions other than Regional Commissioner. Replacement of a Regional Commissioner will be made by recommendations from the Region following the process and procedure laid out in AYSO National Policy.
7. In the event a dispute between two or more regions that cannot be resolved through mutual agreement between the respective Regional Commissioner(s), the Area Director for Area 5C shall resolve the dispute through arbitration or an executive ruling, should arbitration fail.
8. The Area Director and RC's may be removed only by the National Board. Any Board Member, other than the RC's, may be removed by a vote of 2/3 of the Board Members whenever it is determined to be in the best interests of the Area or AYSO or may be removed at the end of a membership year. It is the responsibility of each Area board member to ensure their proper volunteer eligibility via registration as a volunteer in their home region and completion of all required yearly update training and background screenings.
9. Area Funding and budget
  - a. Area funds are used for the support of regions for large purchases, help with expenses they cannot afford, etc.; NAGM and Expo costs for Area Director and Area Staff; travel

(mileage) to section planning meeting (lodging and other expenses covered by section funds); area board meeting expenses; area tournament expenses; winter camp expenses, etc. The expected expense budget should be created yearly and Area revenue numbers created to match expenses.

- i. An approximately \$15,000 minimum balance should be maintained as a support fund for regions in need or to support the startup of new regions.
- b. Area funding is achieved solely through the region's support and fundraising activities.
  - i. The current method is a per player fee decided annually based on the projected Area expenses. This fee ensures that each region is proportionately supporting Area expenses.
    - 1. The Area budget will be presented to RCs in May each year so they can plan their budgets accordingly for the per player fee.
    - 2. Alternate financing methods may be elected by the vote of regional commissioners and can include:
      - a. Area Tournament fees at a rate that would cover all expenses. Regions must be willing to guarantee that the number of teams needed to balance the budget will attend or a proportionate fee by region to balance the budget would be assessed in the Spring.
      - b. Area Fundraising can be used to offset expenses. Area level or tournament sponsors can be found to lower regional fees.

## Area Scheduling Guidelines

1. The Area Director or designated Area scheduler will define the Area season play dates to all regional commissioners by the end of May for fall season and by the end of October for Spring season. A team submission date will be established in which all teams are to be submitted for Area scheduling. In order to provide the best possible notice to our parents all attempts should be made to have the schedule posted 2 weeks prior to the first games.
  - a. At the team submission date, the number of teams is locked and Regional commissioners/registrars should adjust registration to reflect the lock.
2. All teams in 10U, 12U, 15U, and 19U from all regions should be submitted to Area play.
  - a. *Exceptions to this can be made in coordination with the Area Director.*
  - b. *Not fully committing to Area play could impact eligibility for Area tournaments*
  - c. *Outside teams may join Area play if there are spots available to accommodate their teams.*
3. Each region will provide the field availability for their home fields.
4. All teams will be scheduled with a balanced Home/Away schedule. This does not mean that all away games are travel as if teams from the same region play each other one is designated home

and 1 away. Teams from larger regions will naturally, based on the total number of teams, play more games in their home region.

- a. Effort will be made where possible to ensure without impacting schedule balance that travel to farther locations is as balanced as possible. While these attempts will be made, the expectation to coaches and parents should be made that travel to all scheduled game locations is required.
5. Teams will be randomly scheduled via the schedule system. Home games will be scheduled within provided field availability.
6. One of our main goals as an area is to improve our coaching program. **As such recruiting and retaining coaches is paramount to regional success. In order to best facilitate this we have the following guidelines on coaching multiple teams. Each Head coach should only coach 1 team at 10U and above.**
  - a. Based on travel potential, coaches coaching multiple teams throw issues into the schedule.
  - b. 8U and under games should be scheduled so as to not conflict with area games where coach conflicts exist.
  - c. Veteran coaches who wish to coach multiple teams should be used in Coach mentor roles to train and assist new coaches that are assigned as head coaches to a team. This process helps to develop a broad bench of volunteers.
  - d. Exceptions to this must be approved in Advance by the Area Director and there will be no more than 2 waivers granted per region.
7. After the initial schedule is produced, all regional commissioners should review to verify home/away balance and that games match field availability.
  - a. Where teams play away games and other such factors are not under review only that the above listed criteria are met
  - b. Schedules are not intended to be reviewed by coaches.
8. In the eventuality of an odd number of teams in a division, one team will play a double game each week. The additional game could be scheduled on Saturday if possible or if the travel times between locations of the two games will not allow then it could be played on a weeknight.
9. Rescheduling of games should only be done as a **last resort** for weather, school related impacts such as ACT testing, field closure for other reasons, etc.
  - a. Weather Reschedules are done based on the home region's reschedule policy.
    - i. All efforts should be made to reschedule weather postponed games as they are part of the service our customers have paid for. Regions should not have a policy that does not make attempts to reschedule. Games should always take priority over practice.
    - ii. If games are not rescheduled, notify the Area Director to fully cancel the game in the system.
  - b. Coach conflicts, lack of available players, etc are not reasons for rescheduling as the schedule of game dates is provided as listed in Item 1 well before the season and should be publicized to players and coaches as the commitment in advance.
    - i. 10U games- 5v5 is a legal game
    - ii. 12U games- 6v6 is a legal game
    - iii. 15U/19U- 7v7 is a legal game

- iv. If these minimums are met then game should be played
  - v. If these minimums are not met, the two teams should redivide and scrimmage
- c. If a game is to be rescheduled it must be done with the mutual consent between the 2 regional commissioners or their designated representative. Coaches should not reschedule games with each other at 10U and above as the potential for impact to field availability must be considered.
- d. All reschedules should be sent to the Area Director or their representative to be changed in the scheduling system and referee scheduling system.
- e. Game cancellations for any other reason must be approved by the Area director if impacting 2 regions or the regional commissioner if only impacting their region. Game cancellations remove a game that our customers have paid for and should only occur as a last resort. A game should be played even if at reduced sides whenever possible.
  - i. Referee can cancel games based on insufficient number of players
  - ii. Host RC can cancel games due to weather/field conditions with proper communication. Our Area uses the Group Me App for game day communication between RCs. Any closure needs to be communicated by the RC or their representative in the RC chat.
    - 1. It is recommended that each region maintain a similar communication tool to all coaches and referees to effectively communicate changes. Coaches should be trained that even if the home region closes it does not mean where they are playing is closing.
- f. Additional games may be scheduled outside of the Area season such as:
  - i. Internal region only play before, during, or after the season
  - ii. Games against rec teams, outside AYSO tournaments, etc with the permission of the Regional Commissioner and notification to the Area Director.
  - iii. Additional scrimmage games against Area teams on weeknights outside of official schedule

## Area Season Play Guidelines

### Area Play Rules

1. All Area 5C games shall be conducted in accordance with AYSO National Rules and Regulations, Area 5C Guidelines, and the current IFAB Laws of the Game and International Football Association Board Decisions, as contained therein, with all applicable AYSO modifications and Rules of Competition.
2. Please note that there is no mercy rule in the Laws of the game, nor does AYSO have a mercy rule. However, sportsmanship is expected in all AYSO games, so coaches are asked to work with their teams on how to pull back as needed when their lead is significant.
3. A Team roster and all player medical forms must be in the possession of the Head Coach at all games and practices.
  - a. This can be digital.
4. A completed game card/monitored substitution form should be turned into the team's regional commissioner/Coach administrator for every game. If there is a question raised regarding a coaches' following of the Everyone Plays philosophy, the game cards are subject to Area audit to

settle disputes. Each RC shall make accommodations at the field site for game cards to be turned in.

5. All players should play at least 50% of every game, before anyone plays the whole game everyone must play 75%. If a player must sit 50%, please divide the time evenly across both halves.
6. The use of Club pass players should be limited. Teams are assigned and balanced at the beginning of the season according to AYSO Guidelines. Using club pass players to give additional playing time can violate multiple AYSO philosophies.
  - a. Teams are allowed to use "Club Pass" players during regular season games only when they are not able to support a game with the proper number of field players plus 1 substitute at 12U and below or 3 substitutes above 12U.
  - b. Players that are the club pass player and it is not their primary team must be one of the players that sits during the game if subs are used.
7. Each region is responsible to ensure their fields are properly marked and safe to play. This includes maintenance of field conditions, goals, and nets. All field sizes and goal sizes should meet the standards in the AYSO National Rules and Regulations. All field markings should be reflected on the fields.
8. Each region is responsible for Opening/Closing fields for safety and weather issues and communicating this status with the other RCs on game days.
9. If there is a color conflict among teams, the home team shall change jerseys or wear pinnies. Teams should have enough pinnies to facilitate this when needed.
10. Coaches must remain in the technical area during play. Only 2 coaches will be allowed in the technical area. All non-players and coaches must be on the spectator side.
  - a. At 15U and above an additional substitution monitor may be present but they cannot act as a coach.
11. Home team shall provide all game balls.
12. 15U games shall follow standards of 15U and 16U divisions for game time and substitution rules.

## Area Forfeit

1. All games shall be played as scheduled.
  - a. Game cancellations must be instituted as in the scheduling section above
  - b. Coaches **CANNOT** cancel games
  - c. All games 10U and above are considered Area play games even if they have 2 teams from the same region
    - i. Exception is if the whole division from a region is being played internally with prior approval
2. Failure of a team to show up for a game will result in a forfeit. Any customer complaints due to a forfeit should be jointly addressed by the two affected RCs. If there is a financial restitution needed to a customer(s) the RCs should work out the financials among themselves. If a resolution cannot be reached the Area Director can arbitrate.
  - a. Forfeits will be scored so that the team that was forfeited against gets full available points for the game.

- b. Forfeits due to not enough players that show up, will be scored as a forfeit but the game should be played as a practice game with available players from both teams divided evenly.
- c. Teams that forfeit by not showing up during the regular season will be disqualified from postseason play.
- d. Weather cancellations do not count under forfeit rules.

### Area Substitution Rules

1. Substitution of players in all 10U and 12U games should be in accordance with the AYSO National Rules and Regulations: Approximately mid-way through each half of the game, at half-time or for injury.
2. 15U Substitution will be monitored substitution.
  - a. Monitored substitution forms must be kept ensuring Everyone Plays is followed
  - b. Substitutions may be made on any stoppage of play with referee permission.
  - c. All substitutes must enter the field at the Half-Way line on their side of the field. Players leaving the field should leave at the closest place to them. However, the final decision on the substitution process will be with the CR for the game.
3. 19U substitution will be monitored substitution.
  - a. Monitored substitution forms must be kept ensuring Everyone Plays is followed
  - b. Substitutions may be made on any stoppage of play with referee permission.
  - c. All substitutes must enter the field at the Half-Way line on their side of the field. Players leaving the field should leave at the closest place to them. However, the final decision on the substitution process will be with the CR for the game.
4. Substitution for Injury
  - a. If a player is injured, the coach may elect to substitute the injured player, or remove the player from the field and play short until the player is ready to return.
    - i. If the coach elected to play short, the injured player may return when ready, with the referee's permission.
    - ii. A player substituted for injury may not return to the game until the next quarter of play. It is at the referee's discretion if the player can be allowed to substitute back in at a normal stoppage in order to keep with everyone plays philosophy.
    - iii. A player who is substituted receives credit for the entire quarter, regardless of the amount of actual time played in the quarter.
  - b. If a coach, assistant coach, or other team official enters the field to care for an injured player, that player in general must leave the field. However, this can be waved at the referee's discretion.
5. In tournament games with Overtime, 10U-12U should only sub between the 2 OT periods. 15U and 19U still follow monitored sub rules. Only players on field at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> OT can participate in the penalty shootout.

### Area Player Eligibility

1. Each region shall be responsible for ensuring eligibility of its players.

2. All players must be registered with AYSO in the current membership year and in the current season to be rostered to a team. Exceptions will be for section games where any player registered in membership year by the date set forth in Section Games rules is eligible. Even for section games it is recommended to form a “season” for the games to facilitate roster formation.
3. All players must meet the age guidelines for their division set out for the official age chart from AYSO National for the current membership year.
  - a. Age divisions change with the membership year only (August 1-July 31)
  - b. Players may play up 1 division only
  - c. These settings are pre-programmed into the Sports Connect Registration and required for team activation
  - d. Players should only be allowed to play down with the approval of the Regional commissioner and the knowledge of the Area Director for Area play purposes.
4. Players disqualified for medical reason must provide proper documentation before returning to play

### Area Coach Eligibility

1. Each region shall be responsible for ensuring eligibility of its coaches, assistant coaches, and team parents/managers.
  - a. It is the responsibility of the Regional Coach Administrator to ensure coaches have proper training
  - b. It is the responsibility of the Regional CVPA to ensure that coaches have completed Background Check, SafeSport, and Safe Haven
  - c. It is the responsibility of Divisional Coordinators and ultimately Regional Commissioners to verify that all coaches are qualified to represent their age division and meet training obligations as they are assigned to teams.
2. Coach/Assistant Coach Requirements
  - a. **Safe Haven-** eTrainU
  - b. Alabama Coach Safely Act Yearly Requirements (must be completed within 30 days of volunteering by law)
    - i. **CDC Concussion-**eTrainU
    - ii. **Sudden Cardiac Awareness-**eTrainU
    - iii. **Heat Related Illness Training-** Coaches meeting
    - iv. Emergency preparedness, planning, and rehearsal for traumatic injuries- coaches meeting
    - v. Training for all conditioning and how to use training equipment- coaches meeting/field sessions
  - c. **Safe Sport Act**
    - i. Safe Sport full course every three years
    - ii. Safe sport refresher on in between years
  - d. **Age specific coach training**
    - i. Playground, Schoolyard, 6U, and 8U are online only but field session for new coaches for comfort is recommended (field session can be led by veteran coach with instructor not required)
    - ii. 10U online and field session required (Coach instructor required for field)

- iii. 12U online, classroom, and field session required (Coach instructor required for classroom and field)
  - iv. 14U Intermediate online, classroom, and field session required (Advanced Coach Instructor required for classroom and field)
    - 1. 12U is prerequisite course
  - v. 15U coaches must complete Intermediate and at minimum the online portion of Advanced
  - vi. 16U/19U Advanced online, classroom, and field session required (Advanced Coach Instructor required for Classroom and Field)
- 3. Team Parent/Manager Requirements
  - a. Safe Haven
  - b. Safe Sport
  - c. CDC and Sudden Cardiac
  - d. 10U and above Team parents need 10U online coach minimum
- 4. All coaches should have all requirements met before 1<sup>st</sup> games at minimum
  - a. It is preferred that they meet training requirements before 1<sup>st</sup> practices
  - b. In the event of needing a coach instructor course for those courses requiring it, the coach must go ahead and complete the components they can and have a class scheduled ASAP. It will be the duty of the Area Coach Administrator and Area Coach Trainer to ensure that there are sufficient courses at all levels offered on multiple occasions to train coaches properly.
- 5. **Under No Circumstance should a coach ever take the field or interact with players without a cleared background check!!!! Coaches should not be assigned a team without this step occurring.**
  - a. In the event it is discovered that an RC has allowed a coach to participate without proper background screening the RC will receive a warning from the Area CVPA and Area Director.
  - b. Continued failure to follow this fundamental policy and procedure will result in the Area Director pursuing removal of the offending Regional Commissioner through Due Process. Failure to ensure properly vetted volunteers puts the regional commissioner, the region, and AYSO as a whole at tremendous risk.

### Area Referee Coverage and Games with no referee- Add section below for Referee payment policy when completed

- 1. Each region shall be responsible for ensuring eligibility of its referees.
  - a. It is the responsibility of the Regional Referee Administrator to ensure referees have proper training
  - b. It is the responsibility of the Regional CVPA to ensure that referees have completed Background Check, SafeSport, and Safe Haven
  - c. It is ultimately the responsibility of Regional Commissioners to verify that all referees are qualified and meet training obligations before being assigned to games.
- 2. We will abide by US Soccer Referee Abuse Policy 531-9 as referenced in AYSO National rules and regulations and national policy statements. This policy shall apply to all participants, coaches,

volunteers, and spectators. If a report is made, an appropriate disciplinary follow up will be coordinated by the Area Referee Administrator, the Area Director, and Regional Commissioner of the party who committed the offence along with appropriate board members. Any discipline will follow appropriate due process procedures and be handled in the home region of the offending party. Area ref admin and Area director should be kept apprised of the results and outcome.

3. Referee Training Requirements
  - a. Safe Haven
  - b. CDC Concussion
  - c. Sudden Cardiac Awareness
  - d. Safe Sport
  - e. Appropriate level of Referee Training for role performing
    - i. 8U Official
    - ii. Regional Referee
    - iii. Intermediate Referee
    - iv. Advanced Referee
    - v. National Referee
4. All referees should have all requirements met before 1<sup>st</sup> game officiated
  - a. It is preferred that they meet training requirements before season begins
  - b. Area Referee Administrator and Area Director of Referee Instruction will ensure that multiple referee training opportunities are provided before the season begins and all opportunities are published to all regions
  - c. Additional trainings may occur as needed during season
  - d. Intermediate and above trainings will be held on an as needed basis and a list of those needing such training should be maintained by Regional Ref admins and communicated to Area ref admin and trainers as needed to facilitate classes occurring.
5. Every game **MUST** have a referee assigned to it.
  - a. It is the responsibility of the hosting region's referee administrator and regional commissioner to ensure that all games have at least a CR
  - b. Area referees will be allowed to self-sign up for games.
  - c. Wednesday before a game day, the referee admins should look at the games hosted in their region for gaps and communicate with their referees to fill the gaps and move referees around as needed to ensure game coverage.
  - d. Friday before the games the regional commissioner should follow up with communication to the referee admin and all referees on games still not covered and every effort should be made to cover all games with priority going to games where another region is impacted.
  - e. **At the end of the game day the Area Director will look at the game list with the area referee admin and games without an official assigned will be scored as a forfeit with the home team forfeiting the game.**
    - i. The game may still be played as a practice game(scrimmage) between the 2 teams.
      1. Please note coaches in scrimmages should not act as referees but only maintain player safety and teaching just as they would in a scrimmage at practice.

- ii. These losses will negatively affect league standings and tournament eligibility.
- 6. Referee Recruitment
  - a. Every 8U team should have an 8U referee certified parent to ensure these games are covered
    - i. This is an online only course
  - b. Every 10U and above team should have a parent that is certified as a Regional Referee and will represent the team as the team official
  - c. Regional Referees will work to cover primarily the role of CRs at the age level they are comfortable with.
  - d. It is recommended at 15U and above that the ARs have regional referee training at minimum and that at least an Intermediate Referee is the CR.
  - e. At 10U and above, if there is not a full crew, it is recommended to pull parents to act as Club Linesmen- this can be used as a referee recruitment tool.
- 7. All referees in the Area should use the area mandated referee program to sign up for games, and submit post game scores, and disciplinary reports.
  - a. Area 5C has a disciplinary process in place for cards received during a game
    - i. All cards issued should be reflected in the post-game report with player last name (first and last if more than one player/coach with same last name and player number) and the reason for issue
    - ii. Cumulative yellow cards during the season may result in suspension based on rules outlined in misconduct section
    - iii. Red cards result in send off from current game and may result in suspension based on rules outlined in misconduct section
- 8. All games shall be officiated using the Diagonal System of Control with one (1) Referee and two (2) Assistant Referees. The two (2) person (two whistle) system is prohibited by AYSO. Use of "Club" Linesman is encouraged when an insufficient number of game officials are available.
- 9. The game officials for a particular game shall always uphold the IFAB Laws of the Game (with all AYSO modifications and Rules of Competition) and the AYSO National, and Area 5C Rules and Regulations.
- 10. Referee Payment Policy
  - a. Area 5C will pay referees based on the referee payment policy separately linked on the Area 5C website under Area Guidelines.

## Team Formation

- 1. All teams for each region should be formed based on the Balanced Teams philosophy. All regions should utilize one of the methods in Standard Regional Operations in the AYSO Reference Book on Team Formation & Balancing with Player Ratings and a Blind draft being the preferred method.
  - a. The preferred method is to use the Sports Connect Auto Assign Teams feature with the following draft settings
    - i. Total teams option to evenly distribute players
    - ii. Keep Players and Associated Volunteers together
    - iii. 1 Head Coach and 1 Assistant Coach per team
    - iv. In assignment criteria the following priority should exist

1. In coed Evenly split genders, if single gender do not use
2. Evenly split players by age
3. Assign players by Player Evaluation
4. Teams should not be kept together from season to season unless your region only has 1 team in a division.
  - a. Coach requests and teammate requests should not be used as they are a tool to stack teams and prevent team reshuffle. Siblings can be kept together in same division and carpool requests should be handled individually with keeping practices at same nights/location but not necessarily the same team.
5. If you have multiple practice/play locations using your play location custom question can insert in higher priority
- b. In the event a question of a region having A team and B team is raised the balancing process is subject to audit with proof required that effort was made to balance skill level across teams.
- c. It is required that all regions post their team balancing policy.
  - i. There should be no coach requests or teammate requests allowed as this violates our Balanced teams philosophy directly. This is covered in multiple AYSO trainings.
2. All teams must conform to minimum and maximum roster sizes as published by AYSO National office.
3. All Teams will be formed in the regions website and submitted to the Association platform prior to the date of team submission for the season. This includes 8U and younger!
4. All Teams must be activated in the association platform no later than 30 days after the beginning of the season with rosters locked on activation.
  - a. This step ensures teams are compliant with training requirements
5. Coaches are required to have their team roster and player forms on them for all practices and games.
  - a. Player Cards and/or Official Photo rosters are required for tournament play
6. Roster changes after the activation date must be with the permission of the Regional Commissioner **and** Area Director.
  - a. Rosters for Area games must be the team roster from the regular fall season teams. No roster changes for Area games are allowed.
  - b. Rosters for Section games may be combined from all players that played in either fall or Spring season as long as registered in Core programs prior to the registration cutoff provided in section games rules each year.

### Area Safety/Incident Reports

1. Any personal injury, damaged property, or threats of or actual physical violence surrounding an AYSO game, practice, event or property must be reported to the Regional Commissioner for the field where the incident occurred, the Regional Commissioner(s) for the players involved and the Area Safety Director. An AYSO Incident Report must be completed, routed and submitted to AYSO Risk Management in accordance with the written instructions that accompany the AYSO Incident Report.
  - a. Incident reports should be submitted by the coach of the injured player for all injuries.

- b. Other types of incidents must be submitted by all witnesses
  - c. Incident reports are submitted by volunteer to the Regional Safety Director and Regional Commissioner for the volunteer submitting
  - d. The Regional Safety Director is responsible for routing to the Area Safety Director, other Regional Commissioners, and Area Director.
  - e. Area Safety Director will work with regional safety director for routing through the rest of the way.
- 2. It is each regional commissioner and regional safety director's responsibility to ensure all AYSO safety precautions are followed.
  - a. All fields and goals are safe for play
  - b. Players shall not wear anything that is dangerous to either themselves or other players subject to the referee's approval under Law 4 of the IFAB Laws of the Game. AYSO, in accordance with permitted modifications for youth games, allows the following:
    - i. Hair Beads and Clips Hair control devices and other adornments, such as beads, worn in the hair must meet the following criteria
      - 1. Be securely fastened to the head.
      - 2. Do not present an increased risk to the player, teammates, or opponents.
      - 3. Flat clips less than two inches in length may be used to hold the hair in place close to the head so long as their placement on the head does not present an increased risk to the player, teammates or opponents.
      - 4. Hair charms are still considered jewelry and are not permitted.
    - ii. Medical Devices If the device is needed to restrict mobility, protect an injury or support proper alignment to expedite the healing process of a temporary injury and is hard (cast, splint, etc.) then it is not allowed. If, on the other hand, the protective device is used to provide support, flexibility or enable an otherwise healthy player to function normally such as a knee brace, prosthesis, hearing aid, insulin pump/monitor, etc. then this would be allowed provided the device was sufficiently padded to prevent injury to other players.
      - 1. The Laws of the Game specify that "A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous."
      - 2. The Referee is the sole judge of whether or not the individual item in question is permissible to wear in the game.
    - iii. Non-immobilizing Support Devices

1. Soft wrap (Ace bandage) may be allowed by the Referee. No metal clips can be used to affix any type of brace or wrap to the player.
2. Non-immobilizing Braces (Knee, Ankle, etc.) may be worn in accordance with the AYSO National Rules and Regulations and/or AYSO National Board decisions.

### Game Card Submission/Score Reporting

1. Each region should facilitate a method for game cards to be turned in by their coaches.
2. Each regional commissioner or coach administrator should verify on the game cards that coaches have appropriately followed the everyone plays philosophy
3. For each game, referees should submit a referee report through the referee management system, noting the final score and any cards that were issued.
4. For each game the coaches through the Area scheduling system should submit their scores for the game
  - a. In the event the coaches scores do not match the referee report will be used for verification.
  - b. If there is still not a consensus then the Area director or representative will follow up to get a proper score for the match.
5. All games must be scored.
  - a. Games with no referee will be scored as a home team forfeit even though the games will be played as a practice game

### Misconduct

1. It is our expectation as an area that our coaches and volunteers display good sportsmanship and follow the Laws of the Game. However, we know that misconduct during matches will occur. It is our objective to limit this as much as possible. We also endeavor to ensure that all of our regions deal with issues of misconduct equally.
2. We will abide by US Soccer Referee Abuse Policy 531-9 as referenced in AYSO National rules and regulations and national policy statements. This policy shall apply to all participants, coaches, volunteers, and spectators. If a report is made, an appropriate disciplinary follow up will be coordinated by the Area Referee Administrator, the Area Director, and Regional Commissioner of the party who committed the offence along with appropriate board members. Any discipline will follow appropriate due process procedures and be handled in the home region of the offending party. Area ref admin and Area director should be kept apprised of the results and outcome.
3. Yellow Cards- We will track all cautions and each caution will be awarded a 1-point value. Points will accumulate through the season. At 5 points, the Regional Disciplinary Review Board will review the nature of the Cautioned player's infractions to determine if a one game suspension is justified. If so, the player will be suspended for one game.
  - a. If a player reaches 10 points in a season, they will be deemed ineligible, pending final regional disciplinary review, for the balance of the season.
4. Red Cards- A send off will result in immediate dismissal from the game in which the send off occurs. All red cards require the player to miss the balance of the game they are sent off in and the following game. Each red card will go before the Regional review board and they can decide to waive the following game suspension or reduce it to a half or quarter based on the offense.

The disciplinary review committee also reserves the right to enact a longer suspension based on the player's actions.

- a. The exception is a send-off for 2 yellows. 2 yellows will result in send-off from current game and if in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the game a suspension for 1<sup>st</sup> half of next game.
  - b. Red cards are a 2 point in the point system as well (a 2<sup>nd</sup> yellow card resulting in red only is scored as 1 point as a yellow)
5. Points/suspensions will carry over from regular season to tournament
6. Points from a tournament will not carry over to the next season but if a player is sent off in tournament final the suspension will carry into the next season.
7. Coach Misconduct
  - a. Coaches are expected to be the example to our players.
  - b. Coaches points
    - i. Yellow-1 and Red-2
    - ii. Coach reviews will occur with the regional disciplinary review committee at 3 cumulative points. The committee will decide if a 1 game suspension is necessary.
    - iii. Coaches will automatically incur a one-game additional suspension for a red card pending final review from the regional disciplinary committee.
    - iv. If a coach accumulates 6 points they will be removed from the team pending review from the regional disciplinary committee. If this is overturned Area Director must review and approve of the committee's findings.
8. Parent misconduct- Coaches are responsible to ensure their parents stay in line. While coaches should not be carded for parent behavior, the referee should have the coach get their parents under control. If parent behavior becomes unruly, the referee may suspend or stop the game. Unruly parents may be ejected from the field area by the referee notifying regional board members to deal with the situation. This should also be noted in the game report for follow up under the Referee abuse policy 531-9.
  - a. In order to properly facilitate this policy, spectators should sit directly across the field from their team's bench on the same half of field between half way line and the top of the Penalty area line. Signs should be used to designate which side is home and which is away.
  - b. It is suggested to use the role of Team Parent/Team Manager to help coordinate parent behaviour and parents sitting in the correct location. The use of field marshals when possible is highly encouraged.
9. Referee Abuse Policy
  - a. The US Soccer Referee Abuse Policy is being followed by AYSO and has been adopted to our National governing documents. Please see the Referee Abuse Policy summary on our area 5c website under Referee Abuse Policy. All Parents and volunteers sign an acknowledgement of this policy during registration.

## Area Uniform Standards

1. Each chartered AYSO Region shall provide for team members to wear a matching team uniform consisting of a jersey(or T-shirt), shorts and socks.
  - a. Each AYSO jersey or game t-shirt will include the AYSO Traditional Logo that is a minimum of three (3) inches in diameter located on the upper left chest area of the jersey
  - b. The AYSO uniform, including goalkeepers' jerseys, may bear a manufacturer's name and/or logo. The manufacturer's name and/or logo must not be displayed more prominently than the AYSO Traditional logo or be larger than 3 inches and it must not be placed on the upper left front of the jersey. In no event shall a manufacturer's name and/or logo appear in the area designated for the AYSO Traditional logo
  - c. No AYSO uniform may bear a team member's name (i.e. Johnny Jones).
  - d. No AYSO uniform may bear a team name, league name, or program name.
  - e. No replica jerseys are allowed.
  - f. The team member's uniform number shall appear on the back of the jersey in a color or outline that contrasts with the jersey color, and (optionally) may be placed on the front of the uniform on the jersey and/or on the leg of the shorts.
  - g. Jerseys must have sleeves.
  - h. The AYSO Traditional logo must appear in a color that contrasts with the player's primary uniform color. The AYSO Traditional logo must have a prominent appearance on the uniform.
  - i. All AYSO logos must be used without modification. No person may use any of the AYSO trade names, trademarks or logos for any use other than AYSO-authorized activities without the prior written consent of the National Office. This includes having the AYSO Traditional logo stamped on soccer balls, soccer shoes or other equipment, or used in association with the products or services of any person.
  - j. AYSO's Official Uniform Sponsors will be the preferred provider of uniforms
    - i. Augusta is the current preferred uniform provider
    - ii. AYSO preferred uniforms can be ordered through an integration between Augusta and Stack directly through the Sports Connect portal
    - iii. Alternate providers are Score, soccer.com, and many others.
  - k. Region logos
    - i. An AYSO Region may include city/community/neighborhood markings on their right sleeve, short or socks.
    - ii. The AYSO uniform may bear an optional emblem representing Region, skills, local sponsor, Sportsmanship, tournament or event on the upper right sleeve or the lower front of the shorts. Such emblems shall be no more than three inches in diameter (or equivalent diagonal) and must be approved by the Marketing Dept.
    - iii. For the AYSO EXTRA program, an AYSO Region may choose to display the official AYSO EXTRA logo on the jersey left chest area, with the AYSO Traditional Logo on the left sleeve. Both logos will be no less than three (3) inches in diameter.
  - l. Sponsor marks

- i. No Region sponsor logo on any AYSO uniform may conflict with an AYSO National Sponsor.
    - ii. The AYSO National Board of Directors may designate that the AYSO uniform bear sponsors emblems in locations of its choosing. No Region or other logo will interfere with this sponsor emblem.
  - m. Any Uniform variance from just the AYSO logo on the left chest must have a uniform variance form with the National Office, including the use of region logos. Once this is done your region should receive an authorization letter.
- 2. It is recommended that each region utilizes a home/away jersey system with 2 designated regional colors.
  - a. The official AYSO Uniform is Blue and Red 2 jersey set from Augusta via Sports Connect or Red/Blue reversible from soccer.com.
    - i. Blue is used as home and red away in Area 5C for standard uniform
    - ii. For non-standard 2 jersey system darker color is home and lighter color away.
  - b. Benefits of 2 jersey system
    - i. Score, Challenger, and soccer.com will set up a direct uniform store for your region and parents can order directly from the vendor. (May be available with 1 jersey as well from some options)
    - ii. Parents only need to order their uniform set on their first registration and then replace items as necessary based on wear and tear keeping parent costs and region costs down.
    - iii. 2 jersey system eliminates color conflict
- 3. Cold Weather
  - a. Cold weather gear may be worn underneath of uniforms in colder weather.
  - b. Any hoodies must be under jersey and hood must be tucked in.
  - c. Jersey should be outer layer.
  - d. If long pants are worn, they should be the same color as team's shorts.
- 4. Shin guards must be worn for all practices and games.
  - a. Shin guards must be inside the sock (no fold over) and be completely covered.
- 5. Cleats are not required but highly recommended
  - a. Cleats must be a soccer style cleat.
- 6. Glasses, hearing aids, and med-alerts may be worn to practices and games. The use of an eyeglass holder/strap or sports-glasses is recommended. Med-Alerts must be completely covered with tape or a soft cloth band as a safety measure.
- 7. Referee Uniform
  - a. Each region should provide referees an appropriate referee uniform including jerseys (T-shirt ok for 8U only), shorts, and socks. It is recommended to provide them with all equipment needed.
    - i. At region's discretion they may choose to issue T-shirt only for a small number of games to verify referee participation.
    - ii. Yellow is the universal color and is needed for tournaments
    - iii. Your region can set a home region color as well. Green is used by many regions as the 2<sup>nd</sup> color.
    - iv. Referee teams should endeavor to match when possible.

- v. Any alternate color is acceptable.
- vi. Score is the official referee uniform provider.

### Area Points System and Tournament Eligibility

1. Regular Season points are used only to help ensure balanced tournament brackets for the fall tournament.
  - a. Remember that fun not winning is everything. Our primary goal is to encourage player development and ensure that our teams are having fun without a win at all costs attitude.
2. In the event that there are more teams that want to play in the Area tournament than there is capacity to accommodate, the following factors will be considered in selecting teams.
  - a. Referee Participation
  - b. Area fees being paid
  - c. Region equity based on their region size
  - d. Tournament eligible teams must be able to fully commit to the tournament schedule and to be there for every scheduled game.
    - i. Games could be scheduled at any time Friday evening, Saturday all day, or Sunday all day. 19U may be scheduled in the week prior to the tournament in the evenings.
3. Regional Commissioner must agree that the region will pay the entry fees for the accepted teams.
  - a. Entry fee is paid via Area fees
  - b. Outside teams must pay tournament entry fees.

### Area Tournament Guidelines

1. Area Tournament Guidelines will specifically lay out all of the rules to be followed in the Area Tournament.
2. Area tournament will be conducted the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of November. It is possible that if the number of teams warrants the tournament could be split between the first 2 weekends if needed.
3. Area Tournament guidelines will be modified as needed yearly by the Area Referee Administrator, Area Coach Admin, and Area Director.
4. Rules will be sent to Regional Commissioners to review and approve prior to October 1 yearly. Simple majority approval of regional commissioners will apply.

### Changes in Guidelines

1. Any changes to these guidelines after publication, shall be made only via a majority vote of all regional commissioners.
  - a. To request a change, a change request must be sent via email to the Area Director with justification for why the change is requested and what the benefit of the change might be.
  - b. At the next Area meeting changes will be voted on by regional commissioners
    - i. The RC requesting change will be allowed up to 5 minutes to pitch the change followed by questions, answers, and dissenting opinions before the vote.

- ii. A 2/3 majority is needed to approve a change to guidelines.
- c. From time to time, National policies may necessitate changes to these guidelines. In the event of such changes, the Area Director will bring the change to the table and discuss the national change that necessitates the change and discuss if it would be eligible for an Area play exception to National policy.
  - i. If a deviation from National standards is recommended and possible, the RCs must vote to approve the deviation.
  - ii. A 2/3 majority is needed to approve a deviation from National standards.