

# **MIDDLESEX YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION**

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## **TEAM RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **GENERAL**

1. These Rules and Regulations govern Middlesex Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) travel teams that have been selected and rostered by MYSA and registered with the Mid-NJ Youth Soccer Association (Mid-NJ) according to the rules and regulations as set forth in this document, the MYSA By-laws and the rules and regulations of Mid-NJ.
2. All teams shall be subject to the policies and procedures outlined in this document in conjunction with MYSA's Constitution and By-laws and the Rules of Play as established by Mid-NJ unless otherwise indicated.
3. Where there are any omissions in this document, MYSA and Mid-NJ guidelines will apply.
4. Team Head Coaches are responsible for their actions, their coaching staff, their players, and their team families and guests at all times in connection with soccer related, MYSA approved activities, including, but not limited to, league

games, team practices, exhibition games, tournaments, team gatherings, and volunteer and fund-raising activities, as well as communications between or among teams, coaches, players, parents, MYSA, other clubs, and Mid-NJ.

5. Players rostered on a MYSA team may not be rostered to play for any other club during the seasonal year. The seasonal year shall be determined by the League.
6. All teams must be represented at all General MYSA Meetings.

### **TEAM UNIFORMS**

1. All players and team officials (where applicable) will be required to wear MYSA issued uniforms. No deviations can be made to this regulation without the approval of the MYSA Board of Directors (the Board).
2. MYSA reserves the right of final decision as to the design and what components will be included in the uniform package.
3. All teams are required to wear the primary uniform (blue/white striped jersey) when playing home games. The alternate jersey (gray jersey) will be used when away. In the event a MYSA team and its opponent have similarly colored jerseys, Mid-NJ rules state the Home team must change uniforms. Either uniform is appropriate for tournaments and exhibition games.

### **ROSTER LIMITS**

1. No team shall have more than 22 players (22 for Divisions I, II, and III, 18 for Division IV, full-sided, and 14 for small-sided teams of all ages) rostered at one time.

2. No team of any roster size shall register more than three (3) transfer players during a seasonal year. The definition of a transfer player will be determined by Mid-NJ.
3. No team shall have more than a total of 28 (28 for Divisions I, II, and III, 24 for Division 4, full-sided teams, and 20 for small-sided teams of all ages) players rostered in a seasonal year, including transfers.

### **Small-Sided Players and Teams Definitions**

A small-sided team is defined as 8v8 or fewer. The following conditions are set forth by NJ Youth Soccer (NJYS) and apply to all small-sided players and teams:

- **U6 Players**  
U6 players cannot hold a travel team pass and cannot play travel team soccer.
- **U7 Players**  
U7 players can play on a U8 travel team providing a majority (50% +1) of the team are U8. U7 players can only play on a U8 travel team, not higher. Whether a U7 player can play up on a U8 team is a club decision. U7 players cannot play out of state.
- **U7 Teams**  
NJYS does not allow for U7 travel teams.
- **U8 Players**  
U8 players can play on a U8, U9, or U10 travel team. Whether a U8 player can play up on a U9 or U10 team is a club decision. U8 players cannot play out of state.
- **U8 Teams**  
A U8 team can only have U8 and U7 players on its roster. The roster size is limited to 14 players at any one time and a maximum of 20 players being on the roster during the seasonal year. The team may not grow to a full-sided roster during the seasonal year.

- **U9 Players**  
U9 players can play on a U9 or U10 travel team. Whether a U9 player can play up on a U10 team is a club decision. U9 players cannot play out of state.
- **U9 Teams**  
A U9 team can only have U9 and U8 players on its roster. The roster size is limited to 14 players at any one time and a maximum of 20 players being on the roster during the seasonal year. The team may not grow to a full-sided roster during the seasonal year.
- **U10 Players**  
U10 players play on a U10 team. U10 players can play up on an U11 team as long as the U11 team has a majority (50% + 1) of U11 players. U10 players cannot play out of state.
- **U10 Teams**  
A U10 team can only have U10, U9, and U8 players on its roster. The roster size is limited to 14 players at any one time and a maximum of 20 players being on the roster during the seasonal year. The team may not grow to a full sided roster during the seasonal year.
- **U11 Short Sided Teams**  
A U11 short sided team can only have U11 and U10 players on its roster. The roster size is limited to 14 players at any one time and a maximum of 20 players being on the roster during the seasonal year. The team may not grow to a full sided roster during the seasonal year.

## **TEAM COACHES**

1. MYSA Team Coaches shall be volunteers appointed by the

President and/or the Board on a seasonal basis.

2. Team Coaches are responsible for training and coaching to ensure that the club's purpose and coaching philosophy for the appropriate age is adhered to.
3. Team Coaches shall obtain a minimum National or State License "F" Level within the first season (either Spring or Fall) for which they accept such responsibility, or as prescribed by the Mid-NJ Rules of Play. Failure to obtain such licensing will disqualify any individual from a coaching appointment.
4. Team Coaches shall select players for the team according to the current rules and guidelines as stated in this document and in accordance with MYSA and Mid-NJ governing documents. All player selections will not be considered final until approved by the Tryout Committee and/or the Board.
5. Team Coaches shall attend, or send a designated representative to, all required Committee Meetings and General Membership Meetings, as required and specified in the MYSA Constitution and By-laws. Failure to do so may be justification for removal by the Board.
6. Team Coaches must ensure that they abide by all applicable rules, guidelines, and policies.
7. Team Coaches or a team representative, are encouraged to attend any of Mid-NJ's meetings where open and applicable.
8. Team Coaches shall actively encourage team parents to become involved with the MYSA administration in a volunteer capacity.
9. Team Coaches shall assist with any player development program or clinics organized by MYSA.
10. Team Coaches can be removed by a majority vote by the Board. Prior to dismissal, a hearing shall be conducted by

the Board in which the Coach, all parties involved, and members of the team in question or their respective parent or guardian shall have the right to be heard and voice their opinion. Team Coaches shall be removed from their capacity during a season only for conduct that is deemed to be a detriment to the expressed purpose of MYSA.

### **Responsibility of the Team Head Coach**

1. The Team Head Coach is responsible for all facets of the team as stated in this document and in the MYSA By-laws.
2. The Team Head Coach shall select, subject to approval of the Board, an Assistant Coach(es), Team Manager, and/or any other team parent or guardian whose assistance might be required to manage the team or whose participation might be required on the Committees set forth in the MYSA Constitution and By-laws.
2. The Team Head Coach shall create an atmosphere conducive to the development of players.
3. The Team Head Coach shall ensure that the safety of all players is given first priority.
4. The Team Head Coach shall establish and enforce reasonable team rules, ensuring all players are treated fairly.
5. The Team Head Coach shall make their best effort to attend the applicable Coaches Training sessions, General MYSA Meetings, and Special MYSA Meetings as directed by the Board or its representatives.
6. All communications regarding the team, individual players and parents, and coaching staff, whether to, from, or about, shall be the ultimate responsibility of the Team Head Coach, in as much as to ensure that any such communication is appropriate in meaning and intent.
7. The Team Head Coach may involve the Board or its

appointed representative as needed to assist with any such communications.

8. The Team Head Coach shall be alert to the confidentiality of communications and personal information and shall support and abide by MYSA's Privacy Statement.
9. The Team Head Coach shall ensure that team players and/or team parents do not use any personal information (including, but not limited to, player names, player phone numbers, and email addresses) except in accordance with MYSA Policies and with the knowledge and consent of the Team Head Coach.

### **Responsibility of the Assistant Coach(es)**

While the overall responsibility for all team affairs lies with the Team Head Coach, the Assistant Coach shall agree to assume the same obligations and responsibilities to the players, team, and MYSA, particularly where the Team Head Coach is absent. The Assistant Coach(es) shall support the Team Head Coach, reinforce his or her development objectives, and shall provide meaningful input to the Team.

The Assistant Coach has the same responsibility and obligation to MYSA as the Team Head Coach with respect to all MYSA Policies.

### **Responsibility of the Team Manager**

The Team Manager, as appointed by the Team Head Coach, is responsible for:

- Supporting the Team Head Coach in his or her responsibilities to the team and MYSA.
- Adhering to all MYSA requirements and dates as published.
- Acting as liaison between the team parents and Team Head Coach.

- Conducting the team's affairs in a responsible and organized manner.
- Maintaining an up-to-date record of team finances, statistics, player books, etc.
- Reporting to MYSA and to the team regarding finances as required by MYSA policies and procedures.
- Planning team activities (i.e. tournaments, exhibition games, parties, etc.).
- Responding in a timely manner to any request for information from MYSA.
- Cooperating with MYSA in all team matters.
- Completing game sheets accurately and ensuring player books (if kept) are available for each game.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEAM COACHES AND MANAGERS**

1. The conduct of Coaches and Managers shall be exemplary and in accordance with the Objectives of MYSA as specified in the Constitution and its By-laws.
2. Coaches and Managers shall ensure that all players, parents/guardians, and spectators associated with the team, conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with the Constitution of MYSA, its rules and regulations, the Laws of the Game, the polices as set by Mid-NJ, the policies set by the S.A.G.E. program, and the generally accepted norms of good sportsmanship.
3. The Board reserves the right to remove any Coach or Manager who does not meet the guidelines of MYSA's Constitution and its rules and regulations or who behaves in a manor unbecoming to MYSA or its members.
4. Coaches and Managers shall not play, nor conceal from

officials of MYSA, any ineligible player.

5. Coaches and Managers shall not leave any youth player unattended at a field or gymnasium following a practice or game.
6. Coaches and Managers shall remember that, while winning is desirable and all players want to win, winning at all costs defeats the purpose of the game and the principles of MYSA. Recognize that losing or playing below potential can represent a teaching opportunity and can be an important tool to develop players and the team. Encouragement must be given to players for trying their best whatever the outcome may be.
7. By accepting the position Team Head Coach, Team Assistant Coach, or Team Manager with MYSA, you agree to conform to all of the above and understand that failure to do so could result in disciplinary action up to and including the termination of your coaching duties and expulsion from MYSA.

## **PLAYERS**

### **General**

Any and all players, prior to participating in practices or games, shall be registered and in good standing with MYSA.

Players will be selected for a team upon approval by the Board or its appointed representative(s) and the appropriate subordinate committee.

Each season (Fall/Spring), all selected players will be required to pay a \$190.00 fee once they have been registered for a team. The payment shall be due on the registration date as designated by MYSA. Failure to offer payment in a timely manner may result in a rescission of the player's selection. If a special need

exists, whereby a player or parent/guardian cannot afford to pay, a request will be heard and decided upon by the Board. This will be done on a case-by-case basis only after proper procedures have been followed as established in the MYSA Constitution and its By-laws.

### **Code of Conduct for Players**

The conduct of players on MYSA teams shall be exemplary and in accordance with the Objectives of MYSA as specified in the Constitution and supporting documentation. Player actions or behavior that is deemed to violate the policies of the team, MYSA, or Mid-NJ (to include, but not limited to, receiving a Red Card, violent behavior, conduct detrimental to the team, etc.) will be reviewed by the Board and/or the appropriate committee and further discipline, if necessary will be decided upon by the Board.

### **Player Expectations**

1. Equal playing time is not guaranteed for players. Team Coaches shall ensure that a minimum of 25% playing time per game is provided to each player provided the player's health, stamina, and in-game actions and attitude allows.
2. It is the expectation of MYSA that all Team Coaches will commit themselves to the development of his/her team and by doing so will volunteer countless hours of their personal time. Based on this, the above rule can only be enforced or acted upon by MYSA on behalf of a player (and/or parents) if the player (and parents) is also prepared to contribute and give the same in return to the coaching staff. Lateness for practices and games, lack of effort, improper attitude, or a failure to pay the seasonal fee are key examples of failing to contribute.
3. Where a Head Coach has selected a player for his/her team and so advised the player, the Head Coach has made a firm

commitment to that player for one season (Fall or Spring). So long as a player continues to demonstrate their commitment to the team through payment of all fees, regular attendance of games and practices, and proper effort and attitude, a player can then only be removed from a team during that season by mutual agreement between parent/player and Team Head Coach, or by approval of the Board.

## **TEAM SELECTION**

### **General**

As teams, coaches, and players may change from season to season, MYSA will not guarantee that a team will be available for every age level or gender.

Restrictions on players “playing up” and the composition of teams at all age levels will be followed as set forth by the applicable rules and governing documents of MYSA, Mid-NJ, and New Jersey Youth Soccer (NJYS).

Selecting players to bolster rosters who are not yet capable of performing consistently at a travel team level will ultimately create resentment and anger for players, coaches, and parents. Those players will inevitably sit on the bench and may only be utilized sparingly if a game’s final score is not in dispute. Team Coaches should strive to select players from tryouts that are all "starters."

From an organized and structured tryout organized by MYSA, Team Coaches will be in a position to select (with the Tryout Committee’s assistance and Board’s approval) players who, through their development and potential, are deserved of the opportunity to play at a higher level.

Once a team is registered for an upcoming season, Team Coaches may not make cuts. Team Coaches are in effect

making a commitment and agreement with the player (and Parents) to train, teach, and guide the player to their fullest potential for that one season. Team Coaches will be consistently reminded of this policy.

### **Tryouts**

A seasonal year is defined by Mid-NJ as running from August 1 of one year to July 31 of the next and includes two playing seasons: Fall and Spring.

After the end of a Spring season, MYSA will conduct a comprehensive open tryout whereby all players, whether previously rostered or not, will be afforded an opportunity to try out for a MYSA team at their appropriate age and skill level. Upon completion of the Fall season, MYSA will hold limited, age-level specific tryouts to fill rosters on as-need basis and to create new teams as deemed necessary by the Board.

Tryouts will be planned and organized by the Vice President in conjunction with the appointed Tryout Committee. A simple grading evaluation will be used for each player at tryouts. Team Coaches and independent evaluators as appointed by the Vice President will evaluate each and every player at the tryouts. If deemed necessary or appropriate, the Vice President, in conjunction with Board approval, may hire an outside agency to host and conduct tryouts. Ultimately, MYSA will select players for teams in conjunction with the Head Coach. The Board, the Tryout Committee, and the Team Coaches must strive to select players that are all "starters."

### **The Selection Process**

1. A player trying out for an older age level must also attend the tryouts of their own age group unless permission has been received from the Tryout Committee. Any underage player already playing at a higher age level will be evaluated

annually by the aforementioned committee.

2. Where a Head Coach has selected a player for his/her team and so advised the player, the Head Coach has made a firm commitment to that player for one season (Fall or Spring). So long as a player continues to demonstrate their commitment to the team through payment of all fees, regular attendance of games and practices, and proper effort and attitude, a player can then only be removed from a team during that season by mutual agreement between parent/player and Team Head Coach, or by approval of the Board.
3. No player shall be required to play with any particular team. The final decision to accept any offer to play for a MYSA team rests solely with the player and his/her parents/guardians, with the understanding that by declining an offer to play for the team they were selected by, the player forfeits the opportunity to play for MYSA for that season.
4. Any player who rejects a selection to a team, for any reason, shall forfeit their opportunity to play for any MYSA team for that season. The player may appeal this forfeiture. The appeal process will follow the procedure outlined below:
  - The player notifies in writing (or via email) both teams and the Board of his/her request to play for another team and cites reasons why they cannot play for the selecting team.
  - The player (and parents/guardians) meets with the Head Coaches of both teams and a representative of the Board to discuss the situation.
  - The Board votes to allow the player to play for the desired team.
5. Any player rostered for the previous season with a team but not selected by that team for the upcoming season will be

considered released from his/her previous team and available for selection by another team for the upcoming season.

6. Any player releases must be made by the Team Head Coach with a personal, one on one communication with the player and/or parent. If desired, the Team Head Coach may involve the Board or its appointed representative to assist or provide guidance in this respect.
7. Poaching of players, as defined by this document, will not be tolerated and will be referred to the Board.
8. Poaching is an action by a coach, player(s), player's parent(s), or other representative of a team to induce or attempt to induce a rostered player of any other team in MYSA to leave that player's present team and play for another team within MYSA during the current seasonal year. Poaching does not apply to inducing players to play for a team in the following seasonal year. All claims of poaching will be heard by the MYSA Board of Directors or a designated appointed committee thereof. Penalties for poaching may include suspension up to one year or expulsion from MYSA.
9. Upon completion of a tryout, whether open or limited, the Board, the Tryout Committee and Team Coaches will meet to select players. This meeting may be done in person, via email, over the phone, or through any communication process deemed adequate by the Board.
10. Players will be selected for existing teams starting from the oldest age-level existing team to the youngest age-level existing team. An existing team is defined as a team that played for MYSA in the season immediately prior to the tryout and will continue to play for MYSA in the upcoming season. New teams will be formed as deemed necessary by the Board from the remaining pool of players once all existing teams have filled their rosters to the satisfaction of the Head Coach. In the event there are two teams for an age

level, the team that was flighted higher for the previous season will select first.

11. Players who were rostered on an existing team for the season immediately prior to the tryouts cannot be selected for another existing team unless that player has been released by the team or such selection is mutually agreeable to the prior team's Head Coach and the player and parents/guardians.

The Board works carefully to develop and implement rules that make sense all of MYSA and within the context of individual teams. Exceptions to the rules are avoided except in truly unique and special situations. When an exception to the rules is allowed, care is taken to ensure the exception makes sense in the larger context of all the teams and from one season to the next. Exceptions are rare because issues tend to be consistent from one team to the next and where exceptions are ubiquitous, there are no rules.

## **COACH/PLAYER DEVELOPMENT**

Practice is the time to work hard, develop skills, increase conditioning, and to gain a better understanding of the game of soccer. If the time is taken to do these things in practice, then the players will be well prepared for their games, and will have fun. Coaches are encouraged to take full advantage of their team practices — to focus not only on the skills of the game, but also developing an understanding of game strategies.

Throughout the year the members of the Board or their representatives will attend team practices and games to act as observers of both the coaching staff and the players, to provide both guidance and assistance. Team Coaches shall welcome, support, and encourage this involvement, guidance, and assistance. Members of the Board or their representatives will

provide feedback to the Team Coaches about their observations as necessary, and/or requested.

The Vice President will schedule professional training and coaches practices each week during a season as deemed necessary. Attendance by players will be subject to the Team Head Coach and his/her development plan for the team. All Team Coaches should attend every training session and practice when possible,

The Vice President will schedule Coaching Clinics/Seminars during a season as deemed necessary. All Team Coaches are expected to attend these clinics.

The Vice President will schedule Goalkeeper Clinics during a season for both coaches and goalies. All Team Coaches are encouraged to attend to develop their own techniques for coaching goalies. The Designated Goalkeeper (if one) and any and all “backups” are expected to attend.

The Vice President will schedule winter and or summer “off-season” training as deemed necessary.

## **COMPLAINTS**

Any parents who wish to lodge a complaint against a member of MYSA, its coaches, player, parents or other representatives, may do so in writing to the Vice President via email at [van0672@gmail.com](mailto:van0672@gmail.com). Please note that all complaints must be filed in writing before they can be acted upon by the Board.

Last amended February  
12, 2014.