

MWSRA By-Laws

As last amended 2015.

Article I

Membership

Section 1. Any person who is of good sound physical and mental health, having good habits and unquestionable honesty and integrity, shall be eligible for membership in the Association.⁶

Section 2. Applicants for membership may be required to pay a training and examination fee as set forth by the Executive Board, which fee is nonrefundable.

Section 3. No applicant shall be assigned to officiate any game until all required training has been completed and examinations successfully passed to the satisfaction of the Training Chairman and has been registered with the USSF. Such applicants shall then be considered as Probationary Members.⁶

Section 4. After each group of new Probationary Members has completed one full season (Fall or Spring), the Rating and Evaluation Committee shall at the next membership meeting, make a full report on the progress of each such Probationary Member including recommendation for accepting them as Active or Junior Members or continuing them as Probationary Members or removing them from membership entirely. A majority vote of the eligible members present and voting shall be necessary for approval of the Committee's recommendation.

Article II

Ratings

Section 1. Each Active Member shall be rated annually by the Rating and Evaluation Committee at the end of the Spring season and the individual's rating reported to the Executive Board in writing before the beginning of the subsequent Fall season.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall recommend a rating system for the Association which must be approved by a majority vote of members present and voting at a general membership meeting.

Section 3. Members shall not be assigned games above the level at which they have been classified except in an emergency as determined by the Assignor(s).

Section 4. An Associate Member shall referee no soccer games while in such status unless an emergency arises wherein it is deemed necessary and of special service to the Association. The Commissioner may make such determination.

Section 5. Individuals transferring into this Association from another region or Association shall be given an interim rating by the Rating and Evaluation Committee to be determined after a complete review of the credentials submitted by the individual applicant.

Section 6. Any member who is dissatisfied with his/her assigned rating may file a written appeal with the Executive Board within 30 days after having received such rating. The determination of the Executive Board on such matters shall be final. ²

Article III

Transfer of Membership Class

Section 1. No Active Member may transfer to Associate membership until all outstanding financial obligations to the Association have been met and no such transfer shall be approved while charges are pending against such member.

Section 2. An Associate Member may request transfer to Active membership by giving written notice to the President. Such transfer will become effective upon approval by the Executive Board.

Section 3. An Active Member may be considered for Lifetime Membership after serving at least ten years as an active member and after having retired from refereeing. Such qualified members who have contributed outstanding service to the Association may be nominated for Lifetime Membership at any meeting of the membership. Upon a majority vote, the nomination shall be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration and approval. If approved by the Board, such nomination shall be brought to the floor at the next general membership meeting for vote. A 3/4 vote of those eligible members present and voting shall be required for approval. No Lifetime Member shall be eligible to receive game assignments, nor shall he/she have voting rights.

Article IV

Suspension and Expulsion of Members

Section 1. Any member whose conduct is prejudicial to or reflects discredit upon the Association, may, upon vote of the Executive Board be suspended from membership until such time as an investigation can be completed, subsequent to which the Board will proceed with charges or dismiss the matter and reinstate the member.

Section 2. A member may be expelled from the Association, suspended from membership for a fixed time period, or fined for conduct which is disgraceful or detrimental and will bring discredit to the Association; for violation of the Constitution or these By-laws; or for failure to fulfill financial obligations to the Association. After charges have been brought either by a member or initiated by action of the Executive Board, the following procedures shall be followed:

- a. A hearing shall be held by the Executive Board upon receipt of such charges. Notification of the charges will be given to the accused member in writing and an invitation to attend shall be extended. Failure to appear for the hearing may result in an adverse finding by default.
- b. The Board's findings and recommendations as to punishment, if the Board finds the accused guilty, shall be reported to the Association at the next membership meeting in event that the accused desires to appeal the findings to the floor. In such case the accused member may address the membership if desired.
- c. The membership may vote to affirm the Board's findings and punishment recommendations or to exonerate or set a lesser penalty. Vote shall be by secret ballot. At least two-thirds of the eligible members present and voting shall be required for expulsion. A lesser penalty may be adjudged by a simple majority vote.

Article V

Dues, Assessments and Fines

Section 1. Annual dues shall be established by the Executive Board which may be deducted from each member's pay check at the end of either the Spring or Fall season, as appropriate.

Section 2. Other assessments may be made upon the members upon vote by the membership when the business of the Association requires additional funds.

Section 3. The membership may by resolution establish a table of fines for missed assignments or tardiness, missing of mandatory clinics, mandatory membership or special meetings, being out of uniform, or not working a required minimum of games, or for any other reasons deemed appropriate by the membership.

Article VI

Meetings

Section 1. At least one mandatory rules clinic shall be held prior to the commencement of each of the fall and spring seasons.

Section 2. Any member who does not attend a mandatory rules clinic shall be fined unless excused by the Executive Board because of illness, work, travel, or other reasons deemed valid by the Board.

Section 3. Executive Board meetings shall be held as deemed necessary by the President or a majority vote of the Board. All members of the Board will be notified by the Secretary of such Board meetings. Committee chairmen and members and Association members may attend Executive Board meetings only upon invitation by the Board. The Secretary shall maintain minutes of each Executive Board meeting.

Section 4. The election of officers and Executive Board members will be held biennially near or at the close of the Spring season in even-numbered years.

Section 5. General membership and special meetings of the Association shall be held as deemed necessary by the President. By recommendation of a majority of the Executive Board, the President must call a membership or special meeting. Any member who does not attend a general membership or special meeting shall be fined unless excused by the Executive Board because of sickness, work, travel, or other reasons deemed valid by the Board.

Article VII

Voting

Section 1. Voting during the election of officers and members of the Executive Board shall be by secret ballot. However if the nominee is unopposed, he may be voted in by acclamation¹

Section 2. Voting upon motions and all other matters shall be by voice vote or show of hands, except that any five active members present may request a secret ballot upon any matter. The presiding officer shall not vote unless his vote will be determinative of the issue. He/she may however vote whenever a secret ballot is required.

Article VIII

Elections

Section 1. Officers and members at large of the Executive Board shall be elected at the biennial election meeting. The President shall appoint at least one month prior to the election meeting a Nominating Committee consisting of at least three active members. This committee shall select a slate of candidates for nomination at the meeting and the slate will be published in the notice of the meeting which is distributed to all members. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the meeting. Nominations will not be accepted unless the candidate accepts the nomination either in person or by proxy.

Section 2. Voting for each office shall take place immediately after the nominations for that office have been closed. Voting will take place in the order of Officers listed in Article III of the Constitution.

Section 3. Election of the officers shall be by a majority vote of those eligible members present and voting. In the event that no candidate receives a majority of the votes, a run-off election shall be held immediately to include only the two candidates with the highest number of votes.

Section 4. Election of the Executive Board members at large shall be by plurality vote. In the event of a tie vote, a run-off election between the tied candidates will be immediately held in the same manner.

Section 5. The newly elected officers and members at large of the Executive Board shall assume office at the conclusion of the election meeting.¹

Article IX

Qualifications of Officers

Section 1. Only active members in good standing may be considered for nomination and election to office or to the Executive Board.

Article X

Duties of the President and Vice-President

Section 1. The President, and in his absence the Vice-President, shall preside at all meetings of the Association and the Executive Board, and if neither is present, the presiding officer shall be the next officer in line as defined by Article III of the Constitution. The President shall conduct the business of the Association properly in all matters and shall be a member ex officio of all committees.

Section 2. In the event of the resignation, expulsion, suspension, temporary absence, death or disability of the President, the Vice-President shall possess and exercise all duties and powers of the President for the remainder of the term of office or until the end of the period of temporary absence or disability.

Section 3. The President shall have the authority to act in behalf of the Association in all normal business matters requiring immediate attention, except that he may not obligate the Association financially in excess of \$400 without the approval of the Executive Board or the membership. He shall be empowered, with the approval of the Executive Board, to fine or suspend members for detrimental conduct or failure to abide by the Constitution or these By-laws or the resolutions of the membership; provided however that the fined or suspended member has a right of appeal to the entire membership. It shall be the obligation of the President to direct the other officers and committees in the performance of their duties to the best interests of the Association. He/she shall also perform such other duties as are prescribed, from time to time, by the Association.

Section 4. In the event of the resignation, assumption of the presidency, expulsion, suspension, temporary absence, death or disability of the Vice-President, the Executive Board shall select a successor who shall hold the office for the balance of the unexpired term or until the end of the period of temporary absence or disability.⁴

Section 5. The Vice-President shall serve as Chairman of the Rating and Evaluation Committee and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the President.

Article XI

Duties of the Secretary

Section 1. The Secretary is responsible for providing notice to those concerned of meetings of the Association or the Executive Board. He/she shall record the minutes of all meetings including a listing of those excused by the Executive Board. The Secretary shall receive, prepare and dispatch all correspondence concerning activities of the Association as directed by the President. Copies of any correspondence generated by other officers, members of the Board, or Committee Chairmen shall be forwarded to the Secretary for the Association files.

Section 2. In the event of the resignation, expulsion, suspension, temporary absence, death or disability of the Secretary, the Executive Board shall appoint a successor who shall hold the office for the balance of the unexpired term or until the end of the period of temporary absence or disability.

Article XII

Duties of the Assignor(s)

Section 1. The Assignor(s) exclusively will, except in an emergency, make assignments of Association members to all games under the jurisdiction of the Association.

Section 2. The Assignor(s) will submit a complete activity report to the Association covering the entire year at the annual election meeting. In addition, the Assignor(s) will perform other duties as are assigned by either the President or the Executive Board.

Article XIII

Duties of the Treasurer

Section 1. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all fiscal activities of the Association and shall with the cooperation of the Assignor(s) send bills and other statements at the close of each season to all teams, leagues, and organizations which have been provided with officials. Such billings shall be in accordance with each organizational contract. The Treasurer shall receive and disburse all monies on behalf of the Association and he/she shall maintain one or more accounts in a bank or banks selected by the Executive Board. Such disbursements shall be made as directed by the Executive Board, the President within the limitations of Article X, Section 3, or the Association.

Section 2. The Treasurer shall at the close of each season make prompt payment by check or otherwise to each member to whom fees are due. The Treasurer shall also maintain financial records for each member in order to provide the necessary tax information to the members and federal, state, and local government authorities as required by law.

Section 3. The Treasurer and Assignor(s) who receive and/or disburse Association funds shall be bonded for a sum to be determined by the Executive Board, sufficient to protect the Association.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be empowered to make necessary disbursements in order to conduct the day to day affairs of the Association business including, but not limited to, postage,

office supplies, telephone bills, etc. He/she shall submit a written financial report to the Association at each membership meeting.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall maintain the Association's accounting books, records and systems. These records shall be kept in accordance with acceptable accounting practices and standards. The records will be audited annually by an auditor appointed by the Executive Board.

Section 6. In the event of the resignation, expulsion, suspension, temporary absence, death or disability of the Treasurer, the Executive Board shall appoint a successor who shall hold the office for the balance of the unexpired term or until the end of the period of temporary absence or disability.

Article XIV

Executive Board

Section 1. The Executive Board shall meet upon the call of the President as provided for in Article VI, Section 3 of these By-laws. Proceedings of the Board shall be made known to the membership during the following membership meeting. Five members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business.

Section 2. The Board shall consider all business brought before it by the President or the membership and shall take appropriate action to discharge its duties for the best interest of the Association. The Board shall be empowered to levy fines and/or suspend members after formal charges have been made in accordance with the procedures in Article IV of these By-laws. In the event of an appeal and an overturning by the membership of the Board's recommendations, any fine already paid will be returned and/or suspension lifted. In such case the Commissioner will, if at all possible, assign the member to as many desired games as possible to make up for games lost during the period of suspension.

Section 3. In matters of business where the Association might become financially involved or indebted in a sum greater than \$3000.00, the Board will, except in emergency situations, request the authority to act from the membership before proceeding with the business.

Section 4. In any case in which a member of the Board is accused or will be a material witness for or against an accused, such Board member will be disqualified from acting as a member of the Board for the consideration of the case.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall perform such other duties and functions as may be prescribed from time to time by the membership.

Section 6. In the event of a vacancy on the Executive Board, the remaining members of the Executive Board shall appoint a successor(s) to fill any vacancy for the balance of the unexpired term.

Article XV

Committee Functions

Section 1. The Rating and Evaluation Committee shall investigate and evaluate the qualifications of probationary members and shall also observe, screen, and rate active members utilizing rating cards and all other available materials. The Committee shall also be responsible for informing each member of his/her rating and recommending corrective actions when necessary.

Section 2. The Fee and Negotiation Committee shall be responsible for all contract negotiations and shall submit all contract proposals to the Executive Board for its approval prior to them being submitted to the leagues and schools. No member of the Association, other than the President, shall contact any league, team, school or other organization regarding contracts for soccer games without the permission of the Chairman of the Fee and Negotiation Committee.³

Section 3. The Official Rules Interpreter(s) shall coordinate with the Training Chairman, if any, to conduct the Association rules clinics and shall provide rules interpretations as may be requested by the Association or individual members and shall settle any disputes concerning the rules and mechanics of the game. All official interpretations given by the Rules Interpreter(s) shall be binding on all members of the Association.

Article XVI

Game Assignments

Section 1. The assignment of members to officiate games shall be the exclusive function of the Assignor(s). The President or anyone designated by him may make assignments in special circumstances if the Assignor(s) cannot be contacted. Members are not permitted to accept game assignments from any other source without the direct approval of the Assignor(s) with the exception of games assigned by any recognized NISOA, USSF or professional league commissioner. The Assignor(s) will grant such approval upon submission of a timely request unless the Assignor(s) has other assignments available on the requested date. Any member accepting a game assignment from any other source shall be suspended immediately pending action by the Executive Board. All members are considered as independent contractors in the performance of their duties officiating games assigned by the Assignor(s) and are not employees of MWSRA.⁵

Section 2. Unless notified by the Assignor(s) or someone designated by him/her, members will appear at the assigned field. If the game is cancelled, the Assignor(s) will notify the official, if at all possible. Once an official leaves his home or work for the game, he will be paid, even if the game is cancelled. In the event of multiple games at a single site, the notification of cancellation of one of the games does not imply that all of the games will be cancelled.

Section 3. All officials are expected to be at the playing field fully dressed at least 15 minutes prior to the assigned game time.

Section 4. Failure of a member to appear to officiate an assigned game after receiving proper notification of the assignment shall result in a fine equal to the amount of the game fee. It is the

responsibility of the other official(s), if any, who are at the game site, to report the absent official before the game commences to the Assignor(s) for possible replacement. In the event that a substitute cannot be obtained, one-half of the fine will be paid to the official(s) working the game. The fine may be waived if in the opinion of the Executive Board, a satisfactory excuse is presented.

Section 5. Failure of an Assignor to assign a game, or if the assignment is improperly or incorrectly made through the fault of the Assignor(s), shall result in an automatic fine against the Assignor(s) in the amount of the fee for such game. The fine may be waived by the Executive Board in the event that a satisfactory excuse is presented.

Section 6. In the event an official appears late for a game assignment, he/she shall be fined as follows:

- a. if appearance is prior to the end of the first half, one-half of the game fee.
- b. if appearance is after the end of the first half, the entire game fee.

The fine may be waived or adjusted upon presentation to the Executive Board of an acceptable excuse.

Section 7. Members shall officiate games only with qualified sanctioned referees or linesmen, and any member working with an official, knowing him/her not to be so qualified, shall be suspended pending action by the Executive Board.

Section 8. No Junior member shall be assigned to officiate any game where the member is less than 2 years older than the maximum player age of either team.⁶

Article XVII

Rules and Mechanics

Section 1. Members will apply only the set of rules (FIFA, NCAA, High School Federation, or others) established by the organization controlling the game being officiated. The mechanics established by the Association, if not in conflict with the rules being applied, shall be used in all games.

Article XVIII

Uniform

Section 1. The official uniform of this Association shall be as determined by the Executive Board in keeping with the requirements of the various rule making federations and associations.⁷

Section 2. The appropriate organizational patch must be worn on the shirt or jacket located over the left breast. The MWSRA, NISOA, FIFA, USSF, Virginia High School League and Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association patches are acceptable.

Section 3. The following additional equipment shall be in the possession of each official at each game:

- a. two whistles
- b. writing materials
- c. red and yellow cards
- d. watch
- e. coin.

Section 4. A member who fails to wear the proper uniform, whose uniform is not neat and clean, or who does not carry the required equipment while officiating may be fined.

Article XIX

Detrimental Conduct

Section 1. The following examples of misconduct, among others, shall be considered as grounds for suspension or expulsion from the Association:

- a. Officiating a game or appearing at a game under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or being a spectator at any game in this condition.
- b. Wagering upon a soccer match in any respect or acting as a stakeholder for a wager upon such a match.
- c. Conviction of a felony, or conviction of a misdemeanor, if such may bring discredit to the Association or to the member.
- d. Failure to meet financial obligations, if such may bring discredit to the Association or to the member.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of each member of the Association who has knowledge of detrimental conduct on the part of another member, to report such conduct to the Executive Board.

Article XX

Salaries and Fees

Section 1. The Assignor(s) shall be paid seven per cent⁹ of the total amount of the games assigned by them and earned by the members during each season as an assignor's fee.

Section 2. The Association shall receive three per cent of the total amount earned by the members during each season.

Article XXI

Order of Business

Section 1. The order of business at all meetings shall be as follows:

1. Call to order
2. Reading of the minutes of previous meeting
3. Report of the Treasurer
4. Reading of correspondence
5. Report of the Executive Board
6. Assignor(s)' report
7. Report of Committees
8. Old business
9. New business
10. Good and welfare of the Association
11. Elections (if any)
12. Adjournment.

Section 2. Any portion of the order of business may be waived or changed by majority vote of those eligible members present and voting.

Amendments: ¹ December 15, 1988

² June 7, 1990

³ March 4, 1991

⁴ December 19, 1991

⁵ December 21, 1992

⁶ March 30, 1993

⁷ June 14, 1993

⁸ January 30, 1996

⁹ June 18, 2001

¹⁰ August 1, 2015