

# **METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON SOCCER REFEREES ASSOCIATION**

## **BYLAWS**

### **(AMENDED JULY 19, 2018)**

#### **ARTICLE I - Membership**

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

Section 2. Applicants for membership may be required to pay a non-refundable training, examination, and/or membership fee as set forth by the Executive Board.

Section 3. No applicant shall be assigned to officiate any game until all required training has been completed and examinations successfully passed as required to officiate the leagues to which the referee is assigned.

Section 4. All members are considered independent contractors in the performance of their duties officiating games assigned by the Assignor(s) and are not employees of MWSRA.<sup>5</sup>

#### **ARTICLE II – Status and Membership Class**

Section 1. Members shall not be assigned games above the level at which they have been certified or deemed capable by Association assignors, except in an emergency as determined by the Assignor(s).

Section 2. 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.

Section 3. An Active Member becomes an Inactive Member when the member does not fulfill their membership dues or maintain active certifications allowing the member to officiate games. A member who does not officiate games for a full year may be moved to inactive status.

#### **ARTICLE III – 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 for up to six months 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, detrimental, and/or may bring discredit to the Association: for violation of the Constitution or these By-laws; for failure to fulfill financial obligations to the Association; and/or for unprofessional or inappropriate behavior as determined by the Executive Board as noted in Article XVIII. 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 at least one week in advance. Failure to appear without valid and documented excuse as determined by the Executive Board 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 general membership at that meeting. 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, to exonerate, or set a lesser penalty. Procedures for this process are described below:
  - i. Statement by the accused.
  - ii. Statement by a representative of the Board for a duration less than or equal to that of the accused.
  - iii. Questions from the membership to both the accused or Board if desired.
  - iv. Vote by secret ballot with at least two-thirds of the eligible members present and voting be required for expulsion. A simple majority vote is needed to affirm other penalties or punishments.
  - v. If the membership does not agree with the Board's recommendation, the Board may make a one-time recommendation that a lesser penalty be imposed.
- d. At any point during this process, the accused shall be entitled to have counsel or assistance, though it is not required to be provided by the Association, provided the Board is notified at least 24 hours prior to a formal hearing or membership vote as described above.

#### **ARTICLE IV – Dues, Assessments, and Fines**

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

Section 2. Other assessments of cost 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 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. This must be publicly available, distributed, and/or otherwise accessible for fines to be assessed on a member. Fines may be waived or adjusted upon presentation to the Executive Board of an acceptable excuse.

## **ARTICLE V - Meetings**

Section 1. At least one mandatory rules clinic shall be held annually.

- a. 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 2. 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 President or Secretary of such Board meetings. The Secretary shall maintain minutes of each Executive Board meeting.

Section 3. Association members may attend Executive Board meetings only upon invitation by the Board.

Section 4. General membership and special meetings of the Association shall be held as deemed necessary by the President, no less than twice per year. By recommendation of a majority of the Executive Board, the President must call a membership or special meeting.

- a. 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 VI – Elections and Voting**

Section 1. 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 2. Executive Officers and members at large of the Executive Board shall be elected at the biennial election meeting.

Section 3. The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee at least one month prior to

the election meeting. This committee shall create a slate of candidates and accept nominations from the membership for nomination at the meeting and the slate will be published in the notice of the meeting which is distributed to all members.

Section 4. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the meeting for all positions except for the Treasurer. Nominations will not be accepted unless the candidate accepts the nomination either in person or by proxy.

Section 5. Election of the officers shall be by a majority vote of those eligible members present and voting. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, then a run-off election shall be held immediately to include only the two candidates with the highest number of votes.

Section 6. 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 7. The newly elected officers and members at large of the Executive Board shall assume office at the conclusion of the election meeting.<sup>1</sup>

Section 8. 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 9. Voting during the election of officers and members of the Executive Board shall be by secret ballot. However, if the nominee is unopposed, the nominee may be voted in by acclamation.

Section 10. 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 or roll call vote upon any matter.

Section 11. The presiding officer shall not vote unless his vote will be determinative of the issue in the case of forcing or breaking a tie. The presiding officer may vote whenever a secret ballot is required for the election of officers and members of the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE VII – Qualification of Officers**

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

## **ARTICLE VIII – Duties of the President**

Section 1. The President shall preside over all meetings of the Association and the Executive Board. If the President is not present, the presiding officer shall be the next officer in line as defined by the order listed in Article III of the Constitution. The President shall conduct the

business of the Association properly in all matters in accordance with these By-laws and the Constitution and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 2. The President shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Association in all normal business matters requiring immediate attention, except that the President may not obligate the Association financially in excess of \$400 without the approval of the Executive Board or the membership.

Section 3. The President 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 that the fined or suspended member is allowed a right of appeal to the entire membership.

Section 4. The President shall, as necessary, direct the other officers and committees in the performance of their duties to the best interests of the Association.

Section 5. The President shall make the following appointments promptly after the election:

- a. One or more Official Rules Interpreters.
- b. Chair of the Administration & Professionalism Committee.
- c. Chair of the Observation and Evaluation Subcommittee.
- d. Chair of the Recruitment & Development Committee, who shall be the New Referee Development Program Coordinator, unless otherwise noted by the President. If the Coordinator is not the Chair, the President shall also appoint the New Referee Development Program Coordinator.
- e. One or more Game Assignors as deemed necessary and appropriate to conduct Association business.
- f. One or more liaisons to manage existing client leagues.
- g. The President shall have the power to make any additional executive appointments from time to time as deemed necessary or appropriate to fill vacancies or fulfill new roles and responsibilities for the Association.

Section 6. The President shall also perform such other duties as are prescribed, from time to time, by the Association.

## **ARTICLE IX – Duties of the Vice President**

Section 1. 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 2. 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.<sup>4</sup>

Section 3. The Vice President shall assist in the selection and identification of members of the Association for the President to appoint as liaisons to clients, in consultation with assignors and the chair of the Administration & Professionalism Committee.

Section 4. The Vice President shall manage the fines levied each pay period and submit a report to the Treasurer before payments are made.

Section 5. The Vice President shall assist in the promotion of sportsmanship and professionalism among members and clients.

Section 6. The Vice President shall perform other duties as are prescribed by the President.

## **ARTICLE X – 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.

Section 2. 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 3. 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.

Section 4. The Secretary shall coordinate with the President and other members to attend, facilitate, and/or schedule external meetings with client leagues and schools, pre-, during, and post-seasons.

Section 5. The Secretary shall be in charge of updating the Association's online content. The Secretary shall be authorized to appoint a webmaster to manage online content as appropriate.

Section 6. The Secretary shall perform other duties as are prescribed by the President.

## **ARTICLE XI – 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 the By-laws and Constitution.

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.

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.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall perform other duties as are prescribed by the President.

## **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 conclusion of each season to the Executive Board.

Section 3. The Assignor(s) will perform other duties as are assigned by either the President or

the Executive Board.

### **Article XIII - Duties of the Executive Board**

Section 1. The Executive Board shall meet upon the call of the President. 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 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.

Section 3. In matters of business where the Association might become financially involved or indebted in a sum greater than \$3,000.00, 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 or officers of the Association.

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

### **ARTICLE XIV – Committees**

Section 1. The three committees as listed in the Constitution, Administration & Professionalism, Observation & Evaluation Subcommittee, and Recruitment & Development, shall serve to implement and carry out the business of the Association.

a. Administration & Professionalism Committee shall be composed of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and two Board members. The chair shall be appointed by the President.

- i. The committee will discuss and evaluate contracts and client relationships. The President will be the deciding vote, if needed, and will be the representative to formally negotiate and sign any legal contract on behalf of the Association.
- ii. The committee shall manage and track any certifications, registrations, or security check procedures as necessary and coordinate with the President, Secretary, and



- other members to ensure requirements are met.
  - iii. The committee shall be responsible for updating the Association's client rules and regulations.
  - iv. Any misconduct, harassment, unethical behavior, and/or unprofessional conduct by a member of the Association, regardless of their status, shall be reported to the chair of this committee.
  - v. Any report filed against the chair of the committee shall be directly submitted to the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer for separate review.
  - vi. Any report filed against an officer of the Executive Board shall be directly submitted to the other three officers of the Executive Board for separate review.
- b. Observation & Evaluation Subcommittee shall implement and administer the Referee Observer Program. None of the Officers shall serve on this committee.
- i. The chair shall be appointed by the President.
  - ii. Recommendations from the subcommittee will be sent to the Chair of the Administration & Professionalism Committee for review.
  - iii. The chair shall select at least three members of the Association to assist with the program.
- c. Recruitment & Development Committee composed of at least three active members of the Association and the Secretary. This committee shall be charged with supporting the recruitment, retention, and development of new referees.
- i. The New Referee Development Program Coordinator shall serve as the chair of this committee, unless another active member of the Association is appointed by the President.

## **ARTICLE XV – 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.

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 possible.

Section 3. All officials are expected to be at the playing field professionally dressed in accordance with Association's Rules & Regulations and Uniform Policy at least 15 minutes prior to the assigned game time, unless otherwise stated in the league rules.

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, 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, the official shall be fined as stated in the Association's Rules and Regulations, published annually online and distributed to members of the Association.

Section 7. Members shall officiate games only with qualified sanctioned referees, assistant referee, or spectator volunteers as determined and identified by the assigned and certified official, and any member working with an official, knowing him/her not to be so qualified, shall be suspended pending action by the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE XVI – Rules and Mechanics**

Section 1. Members will apply only the set of rules (IFAB/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.

Section 2. The Official Rules Interpreter(s) shall coordinate with the New Referee Development Coordinator 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 XVII - 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, leagues, and associations and be published and accessible online at least one month prior to the start of a season.<sup>7</sup>

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

Section 3. Members and other independently contracted soccer officials who agree to work games for Association clients must follow the approved Uniform Policy and other accepted standards for equipment and professional attire. Officials may be fined for violating the

Association's Uniform Policy.

## **ARTICLE XVIII – Detrimental Conduct**

Section 1. The following examples of misconduct shall be considered as grounds for suspension or expulsion from the Association. These include, but are not limited to:

- 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.
- e. Officiating a game where a conflict of interest may present itself, due to a personal relationship or personal connection with a player(s), team official(s), coach(es), and/or others.
- f. Creating a hostile environment for players, spectators, team officials, coaches, and/or referees.
- g. Physically, verbally, or sexually harassing players, spectators, team officials, coaches, and/or referees.
- h. Misrepresenting credentials that relate to the eligibility of the referee to officiate a particular league or level of play.
- i. Other conduct that brings discredit, insult, or embarrassment to the Association, its officers, and members.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of each member of the Association who has knowledge of detrimental conduct specified above on the part of another member, to report such conduct to the Executive Board. Failure to report detrimental conduct to the Association may be considered detrimental conduct to the Association at the discretion of the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE XIX – Salaries and Fees**

Section 1. The Assignor(s) shall be paid eight (8%) percent 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 (3%) percent of the total amount earned by the members during each season.

Section 3. The Treasurer shall receive a flat annual stipend of \$7,000.

Section 4. Any increase in salaries and fees shall require recommendation from the Executive Board and a three-fifths affirmative vote by the membership present at a regularly scheduled Association meeting.

## **ARTICLE XX – Order of Business**

Section 1. The order of business or agenda at all general membership meetings shall be published a week prior to the scheduled meeting by the President.

Section 2. The order of business shall adhere to Robert’s Rules of Order unless otherwise noted.

Section 3. The order of business or agenda must include a public comment period for members present.

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Amendments:

<sup>1</sup>December 15, 1988

<sup>2</sup>June 7, 1990

<sup>3</sup>March 4, 1991

<sup>4</sup>December 19, 1991

<sup>5</sup>December 21, 1992

<sup>6</sup>March 30, 1993

<sup>7</sup>June 14, 1993

<sup>8</sup>January 30, 1996

<sup>9</sup>June 18, 2001

<sup>10</sup>August 1, 2015

<sup>11</sup>July 19, 2018