

# Constitution of the Northern Virginia Adult Soccer Association

## Article I. Name and Purpose

- Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the NORTHERN VIRGINIA ADULT SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC. (NVASA). It shall be associated with the Metropolitan DC – Virginia Soccer Association (MDCVSA), with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) through the MDCVSA, and with the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) through the USSF.
- Section 2. The purpose of the NVASA shall be to provide fair and competitive soccer to players in the Northern Virginia, metropolitan Washington area and promote related activities.

## Article II. Membership

- Section 1. Any soccer team shall be member of NVASA upon timely payment of all appropriate fees, deposits and fines, and any other criteria established by the Executive Committee.
- Section 2. Each player on a member team must be registered in accordance with NVASA By-laws and any other rules established by the Executive Committee.

## Article III. Executive Committee

- Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following officers: Commissioner, Alternate Commissioner, Treasurer, Disciplinary Committee Chief Justice, Scheduler, Recording Secretary and Recruitment Officer.
- Section 2. The Executive Committee nominates and appoints the Commissioner of NVASA. The Commissioner will appoint an alternate, with the advice, consent and approval of the Executive Committee, to serve as herein described.
- Section 3. Along with the Executive Committee, the Commissioner will appoint officers to serve vacancies as Treasurer, Disciplinary Committee Chief Justice, Scheduler, Recording Secretary and Recruitment Officer to serve a one-year term.
- Section 4. An Executive Committee member may continue at his/her position after 1 year unless challenged at the General Meeting by an NVASA player. If there is a challenge, an election is held and the candidate with a majority of votes becomes the Executive Committee member. If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes is removed from the ballot and another vote is taken.
- Section 5. Vacancies on the Executive Committee shall be filled by a majority vote of the officers if such vacancies occur between General Meetings. The person appointed by the Executive Committee shall serve until the next General Meeting, at which time the membership shall elect an officer to serve the remaining term of the vacant seat.
- Section 6. Any member of the Executive Committee is subject to removal from office. Charges shall be made in writing and a copy given to the accused officer, who shall be allowed adequate time to prepare a defense. Removal shall be by a vote of at least sixty-five percent (65%) of the team captains present at a duly constituted general meeting.
- Section 7. The Commissioner may be removed from office by an affirmative vote of sixty-five percent (65%) of the captains of the league.

## Article IV. Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

- Section 1. The Commissioner shall preside at all meetings, shall be an ex-officio member of all league committees, shall cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie vote at any Executive Committee meeting or team captain meeting, shall make disciplinary findings with the consent of the Disciplinary Chair if the full Disciplinary Committee is unable to consider any matter on a timely basis, and shall represent the league to the state soccer association.

- Section 2. The Commissioner's Alternate shall assist the Commissioner, and any other officer, in the performance of their duties, shall exercise all the powers of the Commissioner in their absence, shall assume the office of Commissioner if it becomes vacant before the next Executive Committee, or General Meeting, and shall receive and record all reports of the referees, referring reports to the NVASA Disciplinary Committee for disciplinary action if they deem it necessary.
- Section 3. The Treasurer shall have charge of and receive monies on behalf of the league, shall keep a detailed account of income and expenditures, shall submit a complete written report showing league financial transactions at every team captain meeting, and shall prepare a budget for future expected transactions.
- Section 4. The Chief Justice shall preside over all disciplinary hearings, shall appoint at the beginning of each season a slate of committee members acceptable to the Commissioner who shall serve during that season, shall excuse any member with an apparent conflict-of-interest in a hearing, shall appoint new committee members mid-season with the consent of the Commissioner, and shall cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie vote at any Disciplinary Committee meeting.
- Section 5. The Scheduler shall set a schedule at the beginning of the season. He shall consider re-scheduling requests and re-scheduling due to rainouts.
- Section 6. The Recording Secretary shall record and publish all meeting minutes.
- Section 7. The Recruitment Officer shall be responsible for recruiting new players and teams to support league growth, and working with captains to fill roster openings.

Article V. Administrative Duties of the Executive Committee and the Disciplinary Committee

- Section 1. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to take such actions as may be necessary and appropriate to administer the following functions:
  - a. Scheduling and re-scheduling games.
  - b. Obtaining referees.
  - c. Collecting, allocating, and disbursing funds.
  - d. Maintaining records of previous meetings.
  - e. Maintaining standings.
  - f. Providing a roster of team captains and officers, upon request.
  - g. Requiring the acquisition and proper set-up of fields by member teams.
  - h. Administering all aspects of the web site.
- Section 2. The Disciplinary Committee shall have the authority to take such actions as may be necessary and appropriate to administer the following functions:
  - a. Hearing complaints from referees, member teams, and players concerning allegations of serious misconduct.
  - b. Disciplining member teams, players, and coaches for infractions of the NVASA Constitution or By-laws.
- Section 3. The Disciplinary Committee shall be led by the Disciplinary Chief Justice, who shall appoint at the beginning of each season a slate of committee members acceptable to the Commissioner who shall serve during that season. The Chief Justice shall cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie vote at any Disciplinary Committee meeting.
- Section 4. The Disciplinary Committee may temporarily suspend a player, coach, spectator or team for a portion of a season for misconduct. A team may appeal any suspension that is not an automatic suspension as defined in the Constitution or By-laws.
- Section 5. With the consent of the Chief Justice, the Commissioner shall have the discretion to make a disciplinary finding, should the full Disciplinary Committee be unable to consider a matter on a timely basis.
- Section 6. The permanent removal of a player, coach, referee, spectator or team for a season or longer, for misconduct, can only be made by an affirmative vote of

sixty-five percent (65%) of the team captains present at a duly constituted general meeting.

Section 7. The Commissioner may temporarily suspend a player or team for a portion of a season for the non-payment of fees. A team may appeal any suspension that is not an automatic suspension as defined in the Constitution or By-laws.

Section 8. Whenever the NVASA Constitution or By-laws require contact of a specific officer, after best efforts made to contact the appropriate officer have been unsuccessful, contact of any other officer will be deemed adequate.

#### Article VI. Executive Committee Meetings

Section 1. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at least once prior to each season. The Commissioner may call additional meetings at any time, and must do so upon request of a majority of the officers. The time and place of each Executive Committee meeting shall be given to each officer at least five (5) days prior to such meeting.

Section 2. No meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held without a quorum present. A simple majority (51%) of the officers shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. Each officer present at any Executive Committee meeting shall be entitled to one vote. Motions pertaining to administrative duties of the Executive Committee as specified in the NVASA Constitution require a majority vote of the Executive Committee to enact. Other motions, not specifically mentioned as administrative duties of the Executive Committee, require the approval of the team captains.

#### Article VII. Team Captains

Section 1. Each team shall have one captain. Each team shall provide at least one alternative captain, in case the primary contact is unavailable.

Section 2. The team captains shall be responsible for attending the General Meetings, serving as contact persons through whom Executive Committee decisions and policies shall be reported, and performing such other duties as defined by the Executive Committee.

#### Article VIII. General Meetings

Section 1. General meetings shall be held once prior to each season. The Commissioner shall designate the time and place for such meetings.

Section 2. A special meeting of team captains may be called by the Commissioner, and must be called by the Commissioner within thirty (30) days of receipt of a written request by team captains of sixty-five percent (65%) of the NVASA teams.

Section 3. At least seven (7) days prior to any general or special meeting of the team captains, a written notice (including email) of such meeting and an agenda shall be sent to each team captain.

Section 4. At any general or special meeting of team captains, the attendance of fifty percent (50%) of the team captains shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5. At any general or special meeting of team captains, each NVASA member team shall be entitled to cast one vote on any matter. A person directly associated with the team must cast each vote. No one person is able to vote more than once. Proxy voting on behalf of absent teams shall not be allowed.

Section 6. The Commissioner may not cast a vote on behalf of any team. The only time a Commissioner may vote is to break a tie.

Section 7. Members of the Executive Committee are not granted any voting privileges during General Meetings, except that they may vote if they are serving as a team captain.

Section 8. On any motion considered by the team captains, a majority is necessary for approval. An exception to majority votes shall be motions that contradict actions taken by the Executive Committee on matters that have been delegated

by this Constitution as an administrative duty of the Executive Committee. Motions to veto such Executive Committee decisions are approved by a vote of sixty-five percent (65%) of team captains.

Section 9. Meetings of team captains shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order. The regular order of business shall be: (a) call to order, (b) reading of the minutes, (c) treasury report, (d) committee reports, (e) unfinished business, (f) new business, and (g) adjournment.

Article IX. Adoption and Amendment of the NVASA Constitution and By-laws

Section 1. The team captains shall adopt a Constitution and By-laws by an affirmative vote of sixty-five percent (65%) of the member teams.

Section 2. Amendments to the NVASA Constitution may be adopted by an affirmative vote of sixty-five percent (65%) of the member teams.

Section 3. Amendments to the NVASA By-laws may be adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of the member teams represented in person by a team captain.

## **By-laws of the Northern Virginia Adult Soccer Association**

Article X. Teams

Section 1. Each team must pay registration, referee, insurance and forfeiture fees, by the deadlines established by the Executive Committee. Team must also supply any other criteria set by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Teams must submit a roster of players by a deadline established by the Executive Committee. The roster must include name, address, birth date, one contact phone, and an e-mail address for each player named on that roster. The roster shall include at least five players of each gender.

Section 3. In order to retain its previous season's final division standing, a team must consist of at least five of the players registered on the official NVASA roster with that team in the previous season.

Section 4. In the case of any NVASA member team split, the group that registers the majority of team players from the previous season's team shall retain the team's NVASA division standing. A team composed of the remaining players will be a new team and placed within the appropriate division by the Executive Committee in accordance with the By-laws.

Section 5. Player passes, issued by, and through, the authority of the MDCVSA, are mandatory. A player must produce a valid pass before they may play in any league-sanctioned match.

Section 6. Each team, before each match, and contemporaneously with their player passes, must provide to the referee, a game roster with all the players that are going to play in that match. Such a roster shall only include players that have been registered with the league and identified according to Section 2 of this Article.

Section 7. Each team shall have a primary uniform consisting of numbered jerseys.

Section 8. In the event two teams have similar uniform colors, the home team must change to a non-conflicting, or secondary, color. If the home team does not change uniforms, it forfeits the game.

Section 9. The non-conflicting, secondary uniform need not have numbered jerseys.

Section 10. Inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated and should be reported to the Executive Committee. Teams are responsible for the conduct of their team players, coaches, and spectators. Team players, coaches, and spectators may not:

- a. Use abusive or degrading language, including racist and sexist comments,
- b. Verbally or physically threaten or assault anyone,

- c. Possess, use, or be under the influence of alcohol or any other controlled substances,
- d. Display poor sportsmanship,
- e. Enter the field of play except for substitution or injury and with the prior permission of the referee,
- f. Harass the referee,
- g. Dispute or attempt to influence the referee's decisions.

Article XI. Players

- Section 1. Players participating in NVASA sanctioned games do so at their own risk. The League, the Executive Committee, and the coaches do not accept responsibility for injuries to any player.
- Section 2. A player may play on any other team provided it is not in the same division.

Article XII. Divisions

- Section 1. Division standings are based on points awarded for results of regular season games. A win equals 3 points, a tie equals 1 point, a loss equals 0 points. There is no point deduction penalty for a forfeit loss.
- Section 2. In the event of two or more teams sharing the same number of points in the final standings, the following criteria, in order of priority, will be used: head-to-head, goal differential (goal scored minus goals allowed), goals against, goals for, most wins, least forfeitures, most shutouts, and coin toss. A forfeit is a 3-0 win.
- Section 3. Promotion/relegation is mandatory. Within each division, the regular season winner will be the first team promoted and the lowest ranked team will be relegated. A tournament winner (if any) will be considered for promotion if different from the regular season winner.
- Section 4. Any new team which has been accepted for NVASA membership will be placed in the appropriate division by vote of the Executive Committee in accordance with the following criteria:
  - a. A team comprised of players with little to no experience may be placed in one of the lower NVASA divisions.
  - b. A team comprised of experienced players, but which is newly formed and does not have a season record from a recognized league, may be placed in one of the middle divisions.
  - c. A team of experienced players with an appropriate season record (as determined by the Executive Committee) or tournament record may be placed in one of the higher divisions.
  - d. No new team will be placed within any division until the end of a season and following the movement of the season's first and last place teams in each division to the appropriate positions within the next higher and lower divisions.
  - e. In placing new teams within NVASA, the Executive Committee shall make no placement which would demote any team that has just been promoted to the next higher division back down to that division from which it was promoted in accordance with these By-laws.

Article XIII. Rules of the Game

- Section 1. Each team must set-up and remove field equipment as required by the Executive Committee. This may include lining one-half of the field, installing a portable goal, a net, and two corner flags, no later than 10 minutes after game time or upon field availability, whichever is later. If any of the above conditions given reasonable notification by the Executive Committee are not met, the responsible team forfeits the game and may be subject to fines.
- Section 2. The home team must provide a game ball acceptable to the referees.

- Section 3. The Commissioner may cancel the game due to rain and/or field conditions at any time before the game time.
- Section 4. After the game time, only the referee has the discretion to call off a game due to heavy rain, lightning, or poor field conditions. During thunderstorms, the referee should follow the 30/30 rule: If lightning is spotted and thunder is heard within 30 seconds, at a minimum the game will be postponed for 15 minutes. The referee has the discretion to temporarily postpone the game to determine the weather's status or wait for clearing weather. The referee will adjust the remaining game time so that it does not interfere with the start of a second, or subsequent, match scheduled after the affected game, provided that the subsequent match has not otherwise cancelled.
- Section 5. If the team wishes to reschedule a game for personal reasons, a special request must be made before schedules are set at the start of the season. Requests for re-schedules will only be accepted with the consent of the Scheduler, Referee Assignor, and anyone else designated with this role by the Executive Committee.
- Section 6. In the case where an assigned referee does not show, then the two teams may decide to use the services of any individual after mutual agreement. At this time, teams should clearly decide whether the game would be a scrimmage or a game that counts in the standings. If there is any disagreement between the teams, then the game will be considered a scrimmage.
- Section 7. All of the NVASA games are governed by the latest edition of FIFA Laws of the Game, except where noted in the NVASA By-laws.
- Section 8. The referee shall start the match clock at the scheduled kick-off time, whether or not the scheduled teams are prepared to start. This rule is necessary because of light timer restrictions. The lights at some late matches may automatically turn off at a preset time and the scheduled game must end on or before that preset time.
- Section 9. Every player must wear shin guards, which must be fully covered by socks.
- Section 10. Metal cleats/studs are not allowed.
- Section 11. There are no slide tackles. A slide tackle is punished with an indirect free kick (or a direct free kick if also a foul under FIFA laws). The referee has the discretion to issue a caution (yellow card), or dismiss a player (red card), for a slide tackle.
- a. A slide tackle is defined as a slide and a tackle. Sliding, in the absence of a player who can make a play on the ball, is not sanctionable as an impermissible slide tackle. However, if in the opinion of the referee, such a slide constitutes any other sanctionable foul, such referee shall be free to call that foul.
- Section 12. A team must play with a minimum of seven players, at least two of each gender, to prevent a forfeit.
- Section 13. The goalkeeper may be of either gender. Including the goalkeeper, there can only be a maximum of six players of either gender on the field at any one time.
- Section 14. If a team cannot field enough players of the respective genders, a 15-minute grace period will be given (however, the referee continues to mark off official time). When the team is able to field seven, with at least two players of each gender, the game shall begin. If a team starts a game with enough players, but because of injury or ejection, has less than seven players on the field, or does not have at least two players of each gender, the team forfeits the game.
- Section 15. Both teams may substitute any number of players (a) after a goal is scored, (b) before a goal kick is taken, and (c) before the second period kick-off. The team in possession of the ball on a throw-in may substitute any number of players. The team not in possession of the ball on a throw-in may substitute any number of players only if the team in possession of the ball is substituting players. A team, having received the referee's permission, may substitute for an injured

player at any time. Unlimited player re-entry is allowed. The referees may further relax substitution rules during extreme heat.

Section 16. If the referee terminates a game due to poor field conditions after the first half is completed, then that game shall count in the standings as a completed game. A game that is terminated due to foul weather before half time shall be re-played in its entirety, field space permitting.

Section 17. Teams shall not unduly delay a game. For instance, pets should remain leashed at all times. If a referee terminates a game due to delay of game, the game shall be a forfeit against the offending team.

#### Article XIV. Discipline and Forfeits

Section 1. A player or coach that receives a red card is automatically suspended for at least the following scheduled (and actually played) League game. The Disciplinary Committee shall decide the length of any red card related suspension.

a. Should a player receive a red card at the end of the season, that player will be suspended for at least the next scheduled NVASA game played during the next season.

b. A forfeit game by the opposing team will count toward the fulfillment of a player's suspension.

c. A player must be registered with the league in order to serve their suspension. If they are not registered their suspension will be tolled.

Section 2. A player or coach that receives three yellow cards during the season is automatically suspended for the following scheduled and actually played League game. Should a player or coach receive three yellow cards during the season and gets the final yellow at the end of the season, that player will be suspended for the next scheduled NVASA game played during the next season, or sanctioned tournament.

Section 3. A player who receives a yellow card must sit out for the next two minutes, but may be substituted.

Section 4. A red card is gender specific. The gender receiving the red card must play with one fewer player of that gender. No substituting of the other gender for the ejected player, otherwise allowed under the NVASA constitution and By-laws, shall be allowed.

Section 5. The referee has the authority to terminate a game at any time. Such a game is considered abandoned. The final outcome of abandoned games will be left to the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee, who will declare a winner, forfeit, or a replay.

Section 6. The following abandoned game situations will generally be forfeits, unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances. The Disciplinary Committee should declare a forfeit if a referee terminates a game because a team:

a. Does not show up for a game that has not been formally canceled.

b. Does not provide a roster to the referees.

c. Does not provide required field equipment.

d. Does not change to jerseys of a non-conflicting color if they are the home team.

Section 7. The following abandoned game situations will be left to the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee, who will declare a winner, forfeit, or a replay. The Disciplinary Committee will likely declare a forfeit if a referee terminates a game because a team:

a. Repeatedly or violently infringes the Laws of the Game.

b. Displays serious unsporting behavior by players, coaches or spectators.

c. Leaves the field before the completion of the game.

d. Causes, or fails to prevent, any other situation worthy of a forfeit.

Section 8. For the following situations, the referee should allow the continuation of the game, but the Disciplinary Committee may later declare a forfeit. The Disciplinary Committee can declare a forfeit if a team:

- a. Uses a player who is not validly registered through NVASA. If requested by an opposing team captain, referee or league official, a team shall supply proof of identification for all players. This request must be made at any time before the start of the second half of play.
  - b. Uses a suspended player.
  - c. Has not paid registration, referee, insurance, and forfeiture fees as determined by the Executive Committee by the deadlines established by the Executive Committee.
- Section 9. If a team is unable to field a team for a NVASA sanctioned game, and thereby decides to forfeit the match in advance, the team representative must notify the scheduler two hours in advance of kick-off time.
- Section 10. The following penalties will apply if a team forfeits a game:
- a. In case of a forfeit, the resulting winner is awarded a 3-0 win.
  - b. If the forfeiting team fails to provide the two-hour advance notice, the resulting winner will be awarded a 5-0 win, and the forfeiting team will pay a fine in an amount equal to the costs of the referee crew for the forfeit match. Such fine shall be payable before the end of the season in which the forfeit occurred.
  - c. Even with appropriate notice, a team forfeiting in advance may still be liable to fines for forfeiting a match.
  - d. The Commissioner has discretion and authority to modify fines resulting from a forfeit with notice.
  - e. In the event of forfeit with notice, the applicable fine for each of the first two forfeits shall not exceed one half of the cost of the referee crew had there been no forfeit. These forfeit fees shall be payable no later than the end of the season in which the forfeit occurred.
  - f. After the third forfeited game, the Executive Committee may take disciplinary action as deemed appropriate. This may include but is not limited to: loss of division standing (which may involve movement to a lower division), and/or team suspension for the remainder of the season.

Article XV. Protests

- Section 1. All protests must be filed by the team captain, in writing to the Executive Committee, within forty-eight (48) hours of the game completion.
- Section 2. The Executive Committee will notify the opposing team, through its team captain, as to the nature of the protest. The team will then have seventy-two (72) hours to respond in writing.
- Section 3. The Executive Committee will then meet as soon as possible after this period to resolve the protest. At the meeting, each team may give an oral presentation to the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee is unable to consider this matter on a timely basis, the Commissioner shall decide.
- Section 4. The Executive Committee will send a response to the protest in writing to both teams, within one week.