

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

SECTION 1.....2
By-Law 1.1 Distribution of By-laws2
By-Law 1.2 Financial Statements2
By-Law 1.3 Proprietary Information.....2
SECTION 2.....3
By-Law 2.1 Nondiscrimination.....3
By-Law 2.2 Abuse.....3
By-Law 2.3 Associations with Conflicts.....3
By-Law 2.4 Registration with USASA and USSF.....3
By-Law 2.5 Annual Report to USASA3
By-Law 2.6 Submission of Documents.....3
By-Law 2.7 Respecting Certain Contracts3
By-Law 2.8 Agreement/contract3
SECTION 3.....4
By-Law 3.1 Regular Meeting.....4
By-Law 3.2 Special Meetings of Executive Board4
By-Law 3.3 Postponements.....4
By-Law 3.5 Action by Conference Consent.....4
By-Law 3.6 Officers Duties4
By-Law 3.7 Nominations to Office.....5
By-Law 3.8 Standing Committees and Officers.....5
SECTION 4.....7
By-Law 4.1 Annual General Meeting7
By-Law 4.2 Semi-annual Meetings.....7
By-Law 4.3 Special Meetings7
By-Law 4.4 Notices.....8
SECTION 5.....9
By-Law 5.1 Recognition of Disciplinary Decisions.....9
By-Law 5.2 Disciplinary Committee9
By-Law 5.3 Grievance Procedures.....9
By-Law 5.4 Appeals.....13
By-Law 5.6 Exhaustion of Remedies Requirement14
SECTION 6.....15
By-Law 6.1 Team Conduct15
By-Law 6.2 League Requirements.....15
By-Law 6.4 Indoor Team Affiliation15
By-Law 6.5 Player Eligibility Registration and Game Priority.....15
By-Law 6.6 Participation in the MASS Men’s and Women’s Select Teams.15
By-Law 6.7 Interplay16
By-Law 6.8 Out-of-State Matches16
By-Law 6.9 Tournament Hosting.....16
SECTION 7.....17
By-Law 7.1 Registration Fees.....17
By-Law 7.2 Minimum Age17
By-Law 7.3 Online Registration and Roster Required.....17
By-Law 7.4 Registration Penalties.....17
By-Law 7.5 Reimbursement of Expenses17

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

BYLAWS

SECTION 1

By-Law 1.1 Distribution of By-laws

One complete set of the Constitution and By-laws will be given annually upon request to each affiliated league of MASS and to the Massachusetts State Referee Committee, the USSF and USASA and to other groups that may interact with this Association.

By-Law 1.2 Financial Statements

MASS will comply with all State and Federal tax requirements governing 501(c)(3) organizations. The Board of Directors will be provided with a copy of any financial review and/or audited financial statement within 30 days of the completion of the review and/or audit.

By-Law 1.3 Proprietary Information

1. Except as authorized by Board of Directors, no affiliate, officer or Board of Director shall make use of any of the data resulting from registration data received by MASS and involving MASS.
2. No person or entity may use the name of MASS or any of its trademarks, tradenames, or that of its sponsors without prior written approval of the Board of Directors.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

SECTION 2

By-Law 2.1 Nondiscrimination

MASS and its member leagues shall not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, color, age, sex, sexual preference, handicap, national origin or religion.

By-Law 2.2 Abuse

MASS may adopt and maintain policies prohibiting sexual and physical abuse, which policies shall conform to the minimum criteria established by the USASA and USSF, except to the extent such would violate state or local law.

By-Law 2.3 Associations with Conflicts

MASS will not join any organization that has requirements that conflict with the USASA's/USSF's articles, bylaws, policies, rules, regulations and requirements.

By-Law 2.4 Registration with USASA and USSF

MASS shall register all of its players, coaches, teams, and administrators with the USSF at least once each year and pay all fees due the USASA and/or USSF on a timely basis.

By-Law 2.5 Annual Report to USASA

MASS shall provide to the USASA an annual report on the registration of players of MASS within ninety (90) days after the start of the USASA seasonal year.

By-Law 2.6 Submission of Documents

MASS will provide annually to the USASA copies of MASS's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and other governing documents and submit changes to those to the USASA for approval no later than ninety (90) days after adoption. Copies of all these documents will be made available to its members.

By-Law 2.7 Respecting Certain Contracts

Directors of MASS may be connected with other Organizations which from time to time MASS has business. No contract or other transaction between MASS and any other Organizations shall be affected because a member of MASS has pecuniary interest. In the absence of fraud, members of MASS may have interest in other Organizations as long as such interest is made public. Such interest in the other Organizations shall not interfere with the individual's legal responsibilities under these bylaws.

By-Law 2.8 Agreement/contract

Before entering into any written agreement or contract the Executive Board will provide copies of the agreement and all other relevant information to the Board of Directors.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

**BY-LAWS
Effective 11/05/2025**

SECTION 3

By-Law 3.1 Regular Meeting

The Executive Board shall meet at least four (4) times per year. Any meeting of the Executive Board may be in person, via conference call, or by other electronic means, at its discretion.

By-Law 3.2 Special Meetings of Executive Board

Special meetings at the call of the President or majority of the Executive Board shall be at a reasonable time and place.

By-Law 3.3 Postponements

Meetings under 3.1 cannot be postponed except by the President. All Executive Board members shall be notified of such postponement by the Secretary or President.

By-Law 3.4 Quorum, Adjournment and Vote Required

At any meeting of the Executive Board a majority of the officers shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

By-Law 3.5 Action by Conference Consent

Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the Executive Board may be taken via conference call or by other electronic means, to include all officers.

By-Law 3.6 Officers Duties

The officers shall perform the following duties:

President:

1. Chairperson of the Executive Board.
2. Official Officer to all external organizations.
3. Ex-officio member of all committees.
4. Annually appoint all committee chairpersons, committee members, administrative and clerical positions and state team coaches subject to approval by the Board of Directors. The President shall have the authority to appoint ad hoc committees and make special appointments to the Appeals Board and Disciplinary Committee due to conflicts of interest subject to the approval of the Executive Board.
5. Authorized signer on the bank account.
6. Prepare and distribute an annual report to all delegates.
7. Review all committee reports.
8. Prepare general meeting agenda.
9. Assume all other duties delegated to this office by the Executive Board and/or Board of Directors.
10. Preside at all meetings.
11. Remove any committee member, administrative and clerical appointment or state coach with cause at his/her discretion with approval of Executive Board.
12. Entitled to vote at all meetings excluding elections.

Vice-President:

1. Succeed to the office of the President in the President's absence.
2. Entitled to vote at all meetings excluding elections.
3. Non-voting member of the Appeals Board.
4. Parliamentarian at all meetings
5. Responsible for select teams coordination.

Secretary:

1. Give notice to all members of the time, date and place of meetings.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

2. Act as Clerk of the Corporation and take charge of all corporate property.
3. Call meetings at the President's request.
4. Take minutes at all meetings.
5. Entitled to vote at all meetings excluding elections.
6. Non-voting member of the Appeals Board.
7. Post mailings.
8. Collect all League information.
9. Submit annual report.
10. Member of the Credentials Committee.
11. Distribute notifications, agenda, and reports to the Board of Directors.

Treasurer:

1. Keep, or cause to be kept, regular books of account which shall be available at any reasonable time for inspection by the Executive Board and Board of Directors.
2. Report to the membership bi-annually on the financial status of MASS.
3. Have access to all documents, titles and valuable financial papers.
4. Distribute all forms having a cost factor.
5. Authorized signer on the bank account. (Checks over \$1000 must be co-signed.)
6. Collect all fines due to MASS.
7. Pay all authorized claims for expenses.
8. Entitled to vote at all meetings excluding elections.
9. Member of Credentials Committee.

Past President:

1. Member of Rules Committee
2. The Past President is an authorized signer on the bank account, unless removed for cause.
3. The Past President is an ex-Officio member of the Executive Committee for at least two years, and may serve longer and perform any other specific duties at the request of the President, notwithstanding those contained elsewhere in this document.

By-Law 3.7 Nominations to Office

Nominations will be presented at the Annual General Meeting. Any person who intends to be a candidate shall notify the President of MASS and the nominating committee at least 14 days before the election what position they seek office. Notwithstanding the above nominations for a position on the Executive Board may be made at the time of the election with approval of 60% of the Board of Directors.

By-Law 3.8 Standing Committees and Officers

1) There will be certain standing Boards and Committees which shall be permanent and subject to being dissolved only by amending these bylaws. Unless otherwise provided, the President shall appoint individuals to these Boards and Committees, subject to the ratification of the Board of Directors. Each Standing Committee shall keep minutes of its proceedings and report same to the Executive Board.

2) Further, from time to time, the Board of Directors may create other committees and the President shall appoint persons to such committees subject to approval of Board of Directors. Each such committee so appointed shall keep minutes of its proceedings and report same to the Executive Board monthly or upon request.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

3) Standing Committees are as follows:

A) Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee shall consist of the Vice President and Secretary as nonvoting members and up to 5 persons from 5 different Leagues as voting members who are appointed by the President, and ratified by the Board of Directors. The President shall appoint the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee.

B) Rules and Revisions Committee

The Rules and Revisions Committee shall consist of the Chairman, the current Vice President, and the Past President. The duties of the Committee are contained in Article 4.5 of the Constitution. The Chairman is appointed by the President bi-annually to a two-year term subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

C) State Referee Committee

Appointed by the President with ratification by the Board of Directors in accordance with USSF Bylaws and in conjunction with Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association the committee is responsible for administration, recruitment, instruction, assessment, and general affairs of affiliated referees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

D) State Director of Coaching

In accordance with USSF and USASA, Bylaws and Policies the State Director of Coaching is appointed by the President annually subject to approval by the Board of Directors. The State Director of Coaching is responsible for the educational training and development of Adult coaches in MASS.

E) Disciplinary Committee

Shall consist of not less than five (5) members, of which at least (3) must attend a meeting (one of which can be attending via teleconference), and a Chairman. The Chairman shall be appointed annually by the President subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The duties and responsibilities for the Disciplinary Committee are contained in Bylaw 5.

F) Hall of Fame

The Hall of Fame Committee shall exist to recognize and honor those individuals and organizations who have performed admirably and have continually maintained and promoted the growth of soccer in Massachusetts. The Members of the Hall of Fame Committee shall consist of all previous inductees. A Chairperson shall be appointed annually by the President subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

G) Cup Committee

Appointed annually by the President subject to approval by the Board of Directors, the Cup Committee shall consist of up to three Commissioners, who shall organize and administer the Cup Competitions in accordance with USASA Bylaws and Policies.

H) Public Relations

The Public Relations Committee shall endeavor to publicize the activities of Mass Soccer, including but not limited to the streaming of games and events, the dissemination of newsworthy articles and/or other items of interest across print or social media platforms, and in any other way promote the interests and good name of Mass Soccer.

L) Leagues' Committee

The Leagues' Committee shall consist of all duly elected officers within each league who are not the President or Director of the league. Its purpose is to share information and develop best practices. Upon request by a Member League, matters such as game results and forfeits may be referred to the Leagues' Committee for recommendations.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS
Effective 11/05/2025

SECTION 4

By-Law 4.1 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of MASS shall be held every year in the spring at a place designated by the Executive Board. The order of business shall be as follows:

- *Roll call/Credential check
- *Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- *Unfinished Business
- *Annual Report of the President
- *Reports of Officers
- *Financial Statement by Treasurer
- *Standing Committee Reports
- *Election of Officers
- *Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws
- *New Business
- *Adjournment

The President shall maintain the right to change the order of business, as he/she deems appropriate.

By-Law 4.2 Semi-annual Meetings

Semi-annual meetings shall be held in the fall at a place to be designated by the Executive Board. The order of business shall be as follows:

- *Roll call/Credential check
- *Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- *Unfinished Business
- *Reports of Officers
- *Financial Statement by Treasurer
- *Standing Committee Reports
- *Approval of Budget
- *Amendments to the Bylaws
- *New Business
- *Adjournment

The President shall maintain the right to change the order of business, as he/she deems appropriate.

By-Law 4.3 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President or a majority of the total eligible votes of the Board of Directors or as follows:

- a. A Special Meeting shall be called by the President upon receipt of a petition signed by at least 10% of the eligible votes. A petition for a Special Meeting must be accompanied by a check for \$250 to defray the cost of the meeting. The originator and the signatories of the petition are responsible for the payment.
- b. A request for a Special Meeting must include in writing the purpose(s) of the special meeting. The agenda for the Special Meeting will be limited to the purpose(s) identified in the petition.
- c. League officers will be expected to attend a Special meeting whenever possible.

The order of business for such meeting shall be as follows:

- *Roll call
- *Communications of need for meeting
- *Discussion
- *Voting if required
- *Adjournment

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

By-Law 4.4 Notices

Notices for annual general meeting and semi-annual meeting and their agenda shall be posted at the MASS Soccer website and e-mailed to the Board of Directors thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. Notification for the annual general meeting should include current voting strength.

Written notice via regular US postage or E-mail for special meeting shall be received by the Board of Directors seven (7) days prior to such special meeting. Such meeting notice shall describe the purpose of the special meeting.

All notices shall be sent by the Secretary, President or others authorized by these bylaws.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

SECTION 5

By-Law 5.1 Recognition of Disciplinary Decisions

Disciplinary action imposed by a Member of the Federation, or recognized by the Federation, shall be honored and enforced by Mass Soccer and its members upon notice from the Federation.

By-Law 5.2 Disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee shall hear cases of misconduct and ethics violations including but not limited to referee abuse, referee assaults, league teams, player or fan violence or misconduct, and complaints of discrimination, which arise out of or as a result of competition. All decisions shall be based upon a majority vote of the members present at a hearing. A decision of the Disciplinary Committee shall constitute a decision of MASS. The Disciplinary Committee shall have the authority to fine, suspend or otherwise take whatever reasonable action it deems necessary against the player, team, league or administrator in order to enforce the MASS Constitution, MASS Bylaws and USSF and USASA Rules and Regulations, Policies and Bylaws. The Disciplinary Committee shall not have the authority to expel any player, team, league or administrator from MASS.

Hearings may be conducted in-person or via video-teleconference. A quorum of the Disciplinary Committee will consist of at least three or more members. No Committee member will vote where there is a conflict of interest or in a matter which involves their League or themselves.

By-Law 5.3 Grievance Procedures

PART I

Section 1.

1. Any complaint by one Member against another, or any complaint by an individual or an Affiliated League which alleges that:

(A) a Member or Affiliated League has failed to comply with its bylaws and/or membership requirements in the State Association; or

(B) the State Association has failed to comply with its membership requirements in the Federation, shall be made in writing and signed under oath by the individual or the president of the Affiliated League making the complaint. The complaint shall be filed with the Secretary of Mass Soccer via email and by certified mail with a copy served on the other parties by certified mail at the same time. The complaint shall set forth the factual allegations in numbered paragraphs with each paragraph containing a single factual allegation. The complaint shall contain also, at a minimum:

- (1) the names and addresses of the parties;
- (2) the alleged grounds of noncompliance and specific rules violated;
- (3) supporting evidence or documentation forming the basis of the complaint; and
- (4) the relief sought.

2. The complaint shall be accompanied by the grievance fee in the form of money order or cashier's check in the amount of \$300. The grievance fee shall be retained by the State Association.

Section 2.

An answer to the complaint shall be filed by the respondent with the Secretary via email and by certified mail, with a copy served by certified mail on the parties, within 30 days after the filing of the complaint. If the respondent is without sufficient knowledge or information to admit or deny a given factual allegation, the respondent may so respond. Failure to file an answer within the requisite time period shall serve as a default, except upon a showing of good cause.

Section 3.

1. The complaint and answer shall be referred to a Hearing Examiner, appointed by the President.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

2. The Hearing Examiner shall review the grievance complaint and answer. The Examiner may seek additional evidence directly from either or both parties in order to determine the validity of the complaint, and may reject a complaint if there is not enough evidence to substantiate the claim. The Examiner may offer arbitration to both parties in an attempt to resolve the matter. If the Examiner determines that, even assuming all facts alleged by the grieving party are true, the grievance would not be granted, the Examiner shall dismiss the grievance.
3. Otherwise, the Examiner shall convene a panel to hear the matter from members of an ad-hoc Hearing Panel, established pursuant to the Bylaws. The Examiner may appoint a Chairman of the Hearing Panel. The panel shall hold a hearing no later than 90 days after the complaint was filed. The Examiner shall render a decision within 30 days after the hearing on the complaint.
4. Neither the Hearing Examiner or any member of a Hearing Panel having a direct interest, either personally or by virtue of an organizational membership affiliation, in the outcome of the proceedings, shall be permitted to adjudicate the complaint.
5. Any individual, Member or Affiliated League may file an amicus brief to the hearing, pursuant to the guidelines set forth in the Policies.

Section 4.

There shall be a right of appeal of a Hearing Examiner's decision to the Appeals Committee under this bylaw.

Section 5.

Each party shall pay their own expenses for participating in the hearing. The fees and expenses for the Hearing Examiner shall be shared equally between the parties and the State Association.

PART 2

Section 1.

For all grievance hearings held pursuant to this bylaw, the following hearing procedures shall apply:

- (1) If the Hearing Examiner determines that a hearing is required as provided by section 3.3, the Hearing Examiner shall consult with the panel members and the parties to the grievance and determine a mutually convenient time and place to hold the hearing, subject to the requirement that the hearing take place no later than 90 days after the complaint was filed. Upon agreement by both parties, a hearing may take place via video-teleconference.
- (2) The Hearing Examiner shall provide notice to all parties of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- (3) The notice required in paragraph (2) of this section shall also include a date by which each party shall provide to the other parties and to the Hearing Examiner:
 - (i) a complete list of any witnesses the party will call to testify at the hearing; and
 - (ii) a complete set of any documents, pictures, or other evidence the party will rely upon at the hearing.The date by which this material is due shall be no later than seven (7) days prior to the hearing date, and each party shall be permitted to supplement its list of witnesses and/or submit additional documents, for purposes of rebuttal only, within three (3) days of receipt of an opposing party's submissions. Except for good cause shown, or where an opposing party consents, the Hearing Examiner shall not accept any evidence or allow the testimony of any witness not already disclosed pursuant to this subparagraph.
 - (a) If a complainant files a brief or other statement in support of its complaint prior to the hearing, its brief or other statement is due not later than 10 days prior to the hearing. If a respondent files a brief or other statement in opposition to the complaint prior to the hearing, its brief or other statement is due not later than 5 days prior to the hearing.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

- (b) The Hearing Examiner may allow the parties to file closing statements after the hearing by the date established by the Hearing Examiner. Those statements shall not exceed 5 pages in length, double-spaced, unless specifically permitted by the Hearing Examiner.

- (4) (a) Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, each party shall have equal time to present its case, not to exceed 3 hours. However, if there is more than one complainant, the complainants shall divide the maximum allocated time of not more than 3 hours among the complainants. If there is more than one respondent, the respondents shall divide the maximum allocated time of not more than 3 hours among the respondents. The order of presentations shall be as follows:
 - (i) opening statement(s) of complainant(s)
 - (ii) opening statement(s) of respondents
 - (iii) presentation of evidence by complainant(s)
 - (iv) presentation of evidence by respondents
 - (v) presentation of rebuttal evidence by complainants
 - (vi) presentation of rebuttal evidence by respondent(s)
 - (vii) closing statement(s) by complainant(s)
 - (viii) closing statement(s) by respondent(s)

The Hearing Examiner shall have full discretion to grant requests to change the order of presentation, add or subtract presentation windows, or alter the time limits as he/she sees fit.

- (b) The following shall be charged against the time allocated to the complainant(s) to present their case: items (i), (iii), (v), and (vii) specified in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph (4), all time used in arguing matters regarding the respondent's opening statement(s) and closing statements) of respondent(s), and the cross-examination conducted during the presentation of the case by respondent(s) under items (iv) and (vi) specified in subparagraph (a).
 - (c) The following shall be charged against the time allocated to the respondent to present their case: items (ii), (iv), (vi), and (viii) specified in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph (4), all time used in arguing matters regarding the opening statement(s) and closing statement(s) of complainant(s), and the cross-examination conducted during the presentation of the case by complainant(s) under items (iii) and (v) specified in subparagraph (a).
 - (d) For any motion or other matter presented at the hearing, each party will be allowed up to 5 minutes to argue the motion or other matter without any time being charged either party. However, if additional time is needed by a party, the additional time shall be charged against the time allocated to that party.
 - (e) The Hearing Examiner shall have full discretion to grant requests to change the order of presentation.
- (5) At the hearing, minors, whether they be witnesses or principals to the grievance, who have not attained the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
 - (6) If witnesses cannot attend the hearing, they may give telephonic testimony if the Hearing Examiner and the parties can hear the telephonic testimony and ask questions of the witness.
 - (7) An attorney or other advisor may counsel a party at a hearing, and may present oral arguments and question that party's own witnesses. Unless permitted by the Hearing Examiner, however, neither a party or the party's advisor shall be permitted to cross-examine the opposing party's witnesses directly. A party may direct questions to the Hearing Examiner, who will ask the appropriate individual for an answer if the Hearing Examiner deems the

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

question relevant.

For all other hearing procedures not specifically addressed in this Policy or the Bylaws, the hearing shall be governed according to the American Arbitration Association's Commercial Arbitration Rules, except that the Hearing Examiner shall have the full discretion to alter those rules and procedures as the Hearing Examiner sees fit.

Section 2.

A decision of a Hearing Examiner is final unless appealed as provided by Part 1.4 of this bylaw.

Section 3.

As provided by Part 1. 3(5) of this bylaw, any Member who is not a party to the grievance shall have the right to file an amicus brief with the Hearing Examiner, setting forth any issues, arguments, or other matters that it feels are relevant to the grievance and the Hearing Examiner's resolution thereof. In addition, Mass Soccer shall have the right to file a brief with the Hearing Examiner, with copies to all parties, providing relevant information that Mass Soccer believes would be helpful to the Hearing Examiner, so long as such brief does not offer an opinion as to how the grievance should ultimately be resolved. Any such brief shall be no longer than ten pages in length, double-spaced. Any such brief filed in support of the complainant shall be filed and served on all parties no later than 15 days prior the hearing. Any such brief filed on behalf of the respondent, and any Mass Soccer brief, shall be filed and served on all the parties no later than 10 days prior to the hearing.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

By-Law 5.4 Appeals

Section 1.

1. The Appeals Committee shall consider and determine appeals from final decisions rendered by Members or Affiliated Leagues, and relating to activities sponsored by the State Association or its members. The Appeals Committee has the power to call for the production of any documents and evidence it may require.

2. (a) In this subsection, "competition" may include games, tournaments, league play, or a regular season. Nothing in this policy shall supersede the given authority of an affiliated organization to hear appeals regarding competitions conducted under its auspices.

2. (b) No decision of a Member or Affiliated League that arises out of the application of the rules of competition which is made in the course of the competition, and has no consequence beyond the competition, is appealable. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the rights of appeal available under the Amateur Sports Act or the Constitution or Bylaws of the USOC relating to the opportunity of Athletes to participate in "protected competition", as defined in the USOC Constitution.

Section 2.

An appeal shall be made in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors and is begun by submitting a notice of appeal within 10 days from the date of the official receipt of the decision by the party making the appeal. Copies of the notice of appeal shall be sent via certified mail to all opposing parties and to the appeals committee or other body whose decision is being appealed.

Section 3.

The notice of appeal shall be accompanied by the payment of an appeal fee in the amount of \$300. The appeal fee shall be retained by the State Association.

Section 4.

The appeals committee or other body whose decision is being appealed shall, within 10 business days of the date of acceptance of jurisdiction by the Appeals Committee of the notice of appeal, forward to the Secretary and to all parties the official record utilized by it in making its decision. Parties should not resubmit documents contained in the official record.

Section 5.

Within 20 business days of the date of acceptance of jurisdiction by the Appeals Committee of the notice of appeal, the appealing party shall submit to the Secretary any argument it wishes to make in support of the appeal and shall furnish copies of the argument to all opposing parties and to the appeals committee or other body whose decision is being appealed.

Section 6.

Within 30 business days of the date of acceptance of jurisdiction by the Appeals Committee of the notice of appeal, all opposing parties shall submit to the Secretary any argument they wish to make in opposition to the appeal.

Section 7.

A decision rendered by a Member or Affiliated League from which an appeal is taken is not suspended pending the final decision of the Appeals Committee unless the Committee otherwise orders. That decision may be upheld, reversed, or reversed and remanded.

Section 8.

A decision by the Appeals Committee may be appealed directly to US Soccer.

Section 9.

Failure to abide by any decision of the Appeals Committee is grounds for disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

By-Law 5.5 Arbitration

Section 1.

1. Upon receipt of a duly filed appeal, if it is determined by the Appeals Committee that the hearing of an appeal would cause undue harm, either by reason of delay or financial hardship, parties may agree to binding arbitration.
2. The purpose of Arbitration is to reach an expedited decision. For the purposes of this rule, only cases which would normally be appealable may be eligible for Arbitration.
3. Nothing in this policy shall supersede the given authority of an affiliated organization to hear appeals regarding competitions conducted under its auspices.

Section 2.

A neutral Arbitrator shall be appointed by the Appeals Committee who shall be empowered to decide the appeal. The Arbitrator has the power to call for the production of any documents and evidence as may be required, and may further set any timeline and/or waive any evidentiary statute as deemed necessary to reach a decision.

Section 3.

A decision rendered by a Member or Affiliated League from which an appeal is taken and in which arbitration is entered shall not be suspended pending the final decision of the Arbitrator. That decision may be upheld, reversed, or reversed and remanded.

Section 4.

The decision of the Arbitrator shall be final and is not appealable.

Section 5.

Failure to abide by any decision of the Arbitrator is grounds for disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.

By-Law 5.6 Exhaustion of Remedies Requirement

No State Association, National League, Regional League, Affiliate, official, club, league, team, coach, referee, player, or the representative of any of them, may invoke the aid of the courts of any state or of the United States without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate soccer organization and as provided by this subpart.

For a violation of this bylaw, the offending party will be suspended until the legal matter has been resolved.

A party violating this Bylaw is also subject to the penalties of suspension and fines, and shall be liable to the USASA, the State Associations, the National and Regional Leagues, and the Affiliates for expenses incurred by the USASA and their officers and by the State Associations, the National and Regional Leagues, and the Affiliates and their officers, as appropriate, in defending each court action, including but not limited to the following:

- 1) court costs.
- 2) attorney fees.
- 3) reasonable compensation for time spent by USASA, State Association, National and Regional League, and Affiliate officers and employees in responding to and defending against allegations in the action, including responses to discovery and court appearances.
- 4) travel expenses.
- 5) expenses for holding National Council or other meetings necessitated by the court actions.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

SECTION 6

By-Law 6.1 Team Conduct

In all games sponsored by MASS or its member leagues, each team is responsible for the conduct of its players, coaches, trainers, managers and fans.

By-Law 6.2 League Requirements

Any properly constituted soccer league or association with four or more teams that has a schedule with a minimum of 8 games per team and a season not less than 30 days duration, may be affiliated with MASS.

Each Association or League must make available a copy of their constitution and by-laws to the Secretary of MASS annually.

Each affiliated League's bylaws must include a method for hearing appeals; and this process must be made readily available to all members of the League.

Each affiliated League shall pay annually such affiliation fees as required by the USASA and MASS.

Each affiliated league shall use the MASS online roster system (reg.mass-soccer.org) to generate game-day rosters.

By-Law 6.4 Indoor Team Affiliation

Indoor leagues may affiliate with MASS provided that at least 4 teams exist with not less than 30 players per league. Affiliation with MASS will only include Indoor competition.

By-Law 6.5 Player Eligibility Registration and Game Priority

No player shall be eligible to participate in any affiliated soccer competition without being properly registered with MASS.

A player may register with more than one team under the following conditions:

*The teams cannot be affiliated with the same league.

The following games will have priority/precedence as follows:

- National Cup Games
- State Cup Games including Champions Cup
- Playoffs
- League Matches
- Rescheduled games

By-Law 6.6 Participation in the MASS Men's and Women's Select Teams.

1) Any player participating in the selection process and is selected for the MASS Select Team, who, without submitting an acceptable justification to the MASS State Select Committee, fails to show up for training or games relating to representing the State, shall be automatically suspended, pending resolution by the Executive Board.

2) The maximum suspension for failing to appear is four (4) games.

3) An allegation by players that they were prevented from showing up by their clubs or league shall not be held as justifiable cause.

4) Any team having more than one player selected by the state team has the option to request a postponement of any games scheduled during any select tournament.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS

Effective 11/05/2025

By-Law 6.7 Interplay

MASS and its member leagues will abide by the USSF and USASA Articles, Bylaws, policies, rules, regulations and requirements on interplay.

By-Law 6.8 Out-of-State Matches

Any member association, league, club or team of MASS arranging or participating in any match where one or both teams are affiliated outside the Commonwealth of Massachusetts must obtain written permission from MASS. For international matches the designated percentage (per the USSF Current Official Administrative Rule Book) of the gate receipts shall be forwarded to the Adult Association Secretary or the Federation Secretary, respectively. A full financial report of each game shall be forwarded to the respective secretary by the home team. The association, league, or club shall welcome a member of MASS authorized by this Board of Directors to be present to verify the amount collected at such matches. Violations of this rule may be dealt with at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

By-Law 6.9 Tournament Hosting

Any member association, league, club or team of MASS wishing to host a tournament must obtain and submit the Tournament Hosting Agreement to MASS.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

BY-LAWS
Effective 11/05/2025

SECTION 7

By-Law 7.1 Registration Fees

The player registration fee structure shall be set by the Board of Directors. Registration fees are non-refundable.

By-Law 7.2 Minimum Age

A player must reach the age of 16 before registering with Mass Soccer. Players under the age of 18 must have a waiver signed by parent or legal guardian.

By-Law 7.3 Online Registration and Roster Required

All players, coaches and/or team managers must register online (reg.mass-soccer.org). No player, coach or team manager may enter the field of play or be on the bench without presenting a valid ID. In addition, a roster generated through the MASS online roster system or other approved form must also be presented at each affiliated match.

No person may be registered with more than one MASS ID number.

By-Law 7.4 Registration Penalties

- 1) Any player found guilty of falsifying or providing false documentation in order to obtain a MASS Soccer ID passcard shall be suspended from MASS Soccer for a period of not less than 2 years and may be subject to further disciplinary action by MASS.
- 2) Any team manager or coach or team administrator who knowingly aids a player in obtaining a MASS ID using false documentation shall be suspended from MASS Soccer for a period of not less than 2 years and may be subject to further disciplinary action by MASS.
- 3) A maximum fine of \$500.00 will be assessed for each league whose fees have not been paid when affiliation fees are due.

By-Law 7.5 Reimbursement of Expenses

- 1) MASS Soccer will reimburse approved expenses for any person authorized by the President or Executive Board to attend a MASS soccer related event.
- 2) All claims for expenses must be submitted with supporting receipts within 120 days.
- 3) Travel expenses shall be the current Federal mileage rate.
- 4) At least once a year the Mass President or Executive Board may invite the President of a Member League to attend a USASA Annual Meeting or a US Soccer Meeting.