

**VERMONT SOCCER LEAGUE BYLAWS**  
**Amended December 15, 2009**

**1.0 PURPOSE, MISSION and STATUS**

- 1.1** The Vermont Soccer League (VSL) is established as a volunteer non-profit organization created for and committed to promoting youth soccer in Vermont.
- 1.2** The Vermont Soccer League (VSL) serves Vermont's youth by striving to achieve the highest standards of youth soccer development - training, instruction and competition - by focusing on player development in an atmosphere of teamwork, respect, and professionalism.
- 1.3** It is the goal of the VSL to bring out the joy that the game of soccer can provide our youth by offering players the highest level of competition available at multiple levels in the state of Vermont, fueling their passion, challenging them to grow, teaching them to persevere, and recognizing their strengths in contributing to their teammates and their communities.

**2.0 REGION SERVED**

- 2.1** The VSL serves youth soccer teams and clubs in Vermont counties.

**3.0 AFFILIATION**

- 3.1** The VSL is affiliated with the Vermont Soccer Association (VSA) and United States Youth Soccer (USYS). Therefore, all players, coaches and team officials must be members of the VSA, or their State Association, and USYS.

**4.0 CLUB MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1** Admission to Membership: To qualify for membership, Clubs must be members of the Vermont Soccer Association or their US Youth Soccer State Association, and be in good standing.
- 4.2** To remain in good standing, a Club must:
- Pay all dues and fees for the season by the due dates.
  - Identify an active Club Coordinator
  - Enroll at least three teams in VSL per year, unless an exception is approved by the Board.
  - Resolve, or have a plan to resolve, any disciplinary actions or events

When a Club cannot fulfill these obligations, it will automatically be classified as an Inactive Member and unable to register with the VSL until the obligations are fulfilled and the VSL Board approves reinstatement. Clubs with Inactive Membership status for more than 2 years must formally reapply for membership.

- 4.3** New Clubs or teams must apply for membership and be approved by the VSL Board and be voted in by existing Member Clubs. An organization desiring to become a Member Club of VSL must submit a written application for membership to the Board of Directors, which shall specify the classification, include the leadership and board, and outline any bylaws, rules, regulations, and other governing documents. The Board of Directors shall review the application and determine whether the applicant has met the requirements for membership. If so, the application will be shared with the Member Clubs for voting. If not, the Board will communicate its decision to the applicant.
- 4.4** Upon acceptance, new Clubs will have Provisional Membership for two years. At the end of two years, if all financial obligations have been fulfilled and the Club remains in good standing, Full Membership will be granted. Provisional Membership allows the Club to have all voting and participatory privileges of Full Membership. During the two years of Provisional Membership, a Club may be dismissed for non-fulfillment of financial obligations, disciplinary actions or other events leading to withdrawal of good standing.
- 4.5** Membership categories and voting privileges include:
- Provisional Membership: voting privileges as long as in good standing
  - Full membership: voting privileges for Clubs in good standing
  - Inactive membership: no voting privileges
  - Suspended member Clubs do not have voting privileges.
- 4.6** The term of membership is for one seasonal year. Membership automatically renews each seasonal year as long as the Member remains in good standing Clubs in good standing with Full Member status will affirm their membership each year, and pay an Annual Membership fee to be set each year at the fall meeting.

## **5.0 CLUB SUSPENSIONS, FINES, AND TERMINATIONS**

- 5.1** A Member Club failing to pay any fees due VSL shall be provided written notice of the delinquency. If those fees are not paid within 60 days after the date of the notice of delinquency, the delinquent Member Club shall be suspended. If the Member has failed to pay those fees by the close of the season or for a period of 90 days after the date specified in the notice of delinquency, whichever is later, the Member Club shall automatically transition to Inactive Membership and be informed in writing of that change in status.

- 5.2** The membership of a Member Club may be terminated for cause by a two-thirds majority vote of the Member Clubs.
- 5.3** The Board of Directors may suspend, fine, or suspend and fine any Member Club of VSL, if the Board determines that the conduct of the Club, or any of its members, is adverse to the best interests of soccer or the VSL, or if the Club has not complied with the requirements of its membership in VSL. The Board of Directors may act only after a hearing, reasonable notice to the Club of the time and place of the hearing, and providing the Club with a reasonable opportunity to present evidence in support of its position.
- 5.4** A suspension or other disciplinary action imposed by VSL in accordance with these bylaws shall be recognized by all Member Clubs of VSL on notification by VSL.

## **6.0 MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

- 6.1** An Annual Meeting will be held in the fall of each year for all Member Clubs. This meeting will include the election of Officers.
- 6.2** A general meeting may be called at any time if an issue cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors. A minimum of three Member Clubs will be required to petition the Board to call and hold a special VSL meeting.

## **7.0 VOTING**

- 7.1** Each Member Club shall be entitled to one vote at the VSL meetings or in any other approved forum.
- 7.2** A quorum for VSL meetings and/or voting purposes is two-thirds of the recognized voting Member Clubs as annotated in Bylaw 4.5 for updates/changes to bylaws, and simple majority for non-bylaw issues.

## **8.0 PROGRAMS**

- 8.1** The VSL offers youth soccer leagues for U-8 through U-19. The specific age group offerings will be determined each year. The USYS age cut-off birth date of July 31 will be strictly adhered to and subject to any USYS updates.
- 8.2** All players, coaches and team officials playing in the VSL must be registered with their USYS State Association.

- 8.3 League play, divisions, rostering, and other rules of play will be outlined in the “League Rules” document and approved by VSL Membership.
- 8.4 The “Laws of the Game” as authorized by FIFA, and modified for youth play, apply to VSL youth soccer games. See “Rules of the Game” for details.
- 8.5 All matches shall be officiated by either VSA approved certified USSF referees or rostered coaches in order to meet USYS regulations.

## **9.0 SPORTSMANSHIP, DISCIPLINE, GRIEVANCES, AND APPEALS**

- 9.1 The VSL enforces a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY. It is expected that every player, parent, coach, official and spectator behave in a sportsmanlike manner. The VSL will not tolerate misconduct or unsportsmanlike behavior including, but not limited to, verbal or physical abuse, disrespect, vulgarity, fighting, or endangerment to others, from players, coaches, spectators or officials towards other players, coaches, spectators or officials.
- 9.2 Reports regarding misconduct will result in disciplinary action, up to and including potential VSL suspension or dismissal as determined by the Board of Directors.
- 9.3 Disciplinary action may be taken by the Board of Directors against any player, spectator, team official, or team, who fails to abide by the Zero Tolerance Policy, the Laws of the Game, VSA Coaches Code of Conduct, VSA KidSafe Policy Guidelines, league rules, tournament rules or any other applicable competition rules.
- 9.4 The ruling of the Board of Directors on issues of discipline and/or protests shall be final. The Board of Directors will attempt to resolve all conflicts and issues during the playing season especially discipline issues regarding players and/or coaches. If either a Board member or one of the members of his/her soccer Club is a party in a protest, complaint or issue, then he/she shall be ineligible to vote or participate in the discipline discussion.
- 9.5 Decisions of the Board of Directors regarding suspensions assessed to players, coaches and/or team personnel may be appealed to the Vermont Soccer Association.
- 9.6 In accordance with USYS By Laws, no member of USYS, official, league, club, team, player, coach, administrator or referee may invoke the aid of the courts of the United States or of a state without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate soccer organizations, as provided within US Youth Soccer.

## 10.0 GOVERNING BOARD

10.1 The VSL shall have a Governing Board made up of the following eleven officers serving two- or three-year terms.

### **The Board of Directors is elected by the Member Clubs as follows:**

**President** - Responsible for overall league coordination. Shall call and conduct league and Governing Board meetings as required, and serve as liaison to the VSA. May make decisions with financial impact up to \$1000 with subsequent approval of the Governing Board. Can sign/approve League checks. The President will serve a three-year term; rotating election in the odd and even years. Candidates for President must be on the existing Board; all Board members are eligible for nomination to President. The President will be elected by a vote of the Member Clubs.

**Past President** - Responsible for assisting the officers in all League matters and ensuring a smooth transition for newly elected Board officers. This position will be an automatic transition from the office of President.

**At-Large (9)** - Nine At-Large positions will be for periods of two years; four or five elected each year. These positions will have voting privileges and serve as preparation for potential movement into a formal position on the Governing Board. The Vice Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer will be appointed from among these elected Board Members.

### **The following positions are appointed by the President from among the elected Board of Directors:**

**Vice-President Division 1** - Responsible for identifying, facilitating discussions and communicating decisions for issues related to Division 1. Can make decisions with financial impact up to \$500, and sign League checks if the president is unavailable. This is a two year position that is appointed in the odd years.

**Vice-President Division 2** - Responsible for identifying, facilitating discussions and communicating decisions for issues related to these Divisions. Can make decisions with financial impact up to \$500, and sign League checks if the president is unavailable. This is a two year position appointed in the even years.

**Vice-President Division 3** - Responsible for identifying, facilitating discussions and communicating decisions for issues related to these Divisions. Can make decisions with financial impact up to \$500, and sign League checks if the president is unavailable. This is a two year position that is appointed in the odd years.

**Secretary** – Will give proper notice of all VSL meetings; ensure that minutes of VSL meetings are taken and published; ensure the proper custody of VSL records; ensure that a record is kept of the name and address and other information of each Member, Director, officer, and employee of VSL. This is a two year position that is appointed in the odd years.

**Treasurer** - Shall direct the keeping of full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements of VSL, in accordance with the financial policies of VSL; shall oversee the preparation of financial statements on a monthly basis, with additional statements being prepared as directed by the Board of Directors; assist the Board of Directors in reviewing a proposed annual budget for VSL; prepare papers regarding the tax exempt status of VSL. May make decisions with financial impact up to \$1000 with subsequent approval of the Governing Board. This is a two year position that is appointed in the even years.

- 10.2** Officers will be elected annually during the fall meeting. Special elections can be held for filling unexpected vacant positions. This special election will be for any position except President, which will automatically be filled by the most senior Vice-President.
- 10.3** The Board of Directors shall hold at least four regular meetings each year. The Board shall establish the time, place, and location of the meetings. Written notice of a regular meeting must be given at least 10 days before the date of the meeting. Proxies are not permitted at meetings of the Board of Directors.
- 10.4** The Governing Board will require six members to be present to form a quorum.
- 10.5** The President will have authorization to a second vote when voting is deadlocked.
- 10.6** Any member of the Board of Directors may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors, or by a two-thirds vote of the Member Clubs entitled to vote for that office.

## **11.0 CLUB AND DIVISION COORDINATORS**

- 11.1** Each member Club must identify a Club Coordinator, whose duties include, but are not limited to, team survey and registration, development and approval of League schedules, coordinating coaches for their Club and working with the Governing Board to act as liaison between their Club and the VSL governing body. The Coordinator will also work with the Division Coordinator as required on any issues related to officiating or re-scheduling.

**11.2** The VSL may hire or appoint Division Coordinator(s), whose duties include, but are not limited to, working with the Club Coordinators to make sure day-to-day operation of League play goes smoothly. They will work with scheduler and Clubs to develop season's divisions and schedule, act as a liaison between all Clubs and teams in their division and the VSL Governing Board, and perform any other duties agreed upon by the Governing Board. During the season, they will coordinate all forfeits and re-schedules, and work with the Assignor on any issues related to officiating. Fees paid to the Division Coordinators will be reviewed annually and compensation will be set by a majority member vote.

## **12.0 TEAM REGISTRATION**

**12.1** All team surveys (applications) must be received prior to the beginning of each season on a date determined at the fall meeting. The team rosters and coach information must be submitted by the date determined at the fall meeting on official USYS registration forms and sent directly to the VSA office.

## **13.0 LEAGUE FEES**

**13.1** The VSL has the authority to collect the following fees:

- A per Club fee for annual membership
- A per team/roster fee for VSL league operation
- A fee for referees as determined by the Referee Assignor prior to each season.

**13.2** All fees for each Club must be received by the VSL treasurer by the date established at the fall meeting. Non payment of league roster or referee fees will result in omission from the League schedule and any subsequent League games.

**13.3** If for any reason a Club or team is dismissed due to negligence or violation of League rules, roster fees will be forfeited.

**13.4** Directors at least 30 days in advance of Annual Fall Meeting, or other forum for voting.

## **14.0 AMENDMENTS TO LEAGUE BYLAWS**

**14.1** Amendments to the bylaws shall require a vote of two-thirds of all member Clubs in person at a meeting or by email.

**14.2** Any proposed amendment to the bylaws of VSL may be made by a Member Club; the Board of Directors; or an Officer. Each proposed amendment for formal consideration shall be sent in writing or by email by VSL to each Member Club and the Board of Directors at least 30 days in advance of Annual

Fall Meeting, or at least 10 days in advance of other approved forum for voting. During the Annual Fall Meeting, or other approved forum for voting, Member Clubs, the Board of Directors, or an Officer may make a motion from the floor to revise amendments under consideration, which will be voted on by the Clubs under the quorum guidelines in 14.1.