



Leagues Policy

(September 18, 2021)

US YOUTH SOCCER

Leagues Policy

Rule 101. DEFINITIONS

Section 1. Except as otherwise provided, the following definitions apply to this policy:

- (1) "Article" preceding a Roman numeral means a reference to a specific portion of the US Youth Soccer Bylaws.
- (2) "Board of Directors" means the Board of Directors of US Youth Soccer established under Article XIII.
- (3) "CEO" and "CEO of US Youth Soccer" means the Chief Executive Officer of US Youth Soccer established under Article XVIII.
- (4) "NL" means the US Youth Soccer National League as established by this policy.
- (5) "NL Commissioner" means National League Commissioner provided by Rule 103, Section 3 of this policy.
- (6) "NL Management Group" and "Management Group" means the National League Management Group as established by Rule 103, Section 2 of this policy.
- (7) "NL Managers" means the managers of the respective leagues at the conference level of this competition.
- (8) "Conference" means the competition tier of leagues below the National tier. Previously, this tier of leagues was known as the Regional Leagues or Multi-State Leagues within US Youth Soccer.

Rule 102. ESTABLISHMENT AND TITLE

Section 1. US Youth Soccer shall conduct annually a series of League competitions for its highest level of teams and clubs above the State Association level.

Section 2. There shall be individual, separately conducted Leagues for boys and girls in each of the age groups.

Section 3. The overall title of the League Competitions shall be "US YOUTH SOCCER NATIONAL LEAGUE."

Rule 103. ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. There is a National League Management Group. The NL Management Group has authority for the administration of the NL as provided by this policy.

Section 2. The NL Management Group will consist of the Director of Competitions and Event Operations and three (3) NL Managers, appointed by the USYS CEO. The NL Management Group Chairperson shall be the National League (NL) Commissioner.

Section 3. The NL Commissioner shall be responsible for the administration of the NL in accordance with this policy. The NL Commissioner shall serve as the Chairperson of the NL Management Group.

Section 4. In addition to the specific powers detailed in other sections of this policy, the NL Management Group is vested with all necessary power and authority to manage, regulate, supervise, administer, and conduct the NL.

Section 5. The NL Management Group will have authority subject to the provisions of this policy, to prescribe all NL rules, regulations and procedures reasonable and necessary for the administration and growth of the NL. All NL rules, regulations and procedures must be in writing and available for inspection by administrators, coaches, teams, players, parents and others.

Section 6. Except as otherwise provided in Rule 104, Sections 7 and 8 of this policy, all proposed NL rules, regulations and procedures, and amendments to them, must be in writing and note an effective date at least one (1) day after the date it has been approved by the NL Management Group. A copy of each NL rule, regulation, procedure and amendment approved by the Management Group, including those adopted under Rule 104, Sections 7 and 8, shall be made generally available in writing.

Section 7. The NL Management Group is authorized to establish various technical, advisory, and other specialized support groups and designate persons on either a permanent or ad hoc basis to assist and advise the Management Group in the operation of the NL.

Section 8. The CEO of US Youth Soccer or designee appointed by the CEO may establish one or more paid NL positions and may retain persons to fill those positions either as employees or independent contractors of US Youth Soccer. From time to time, the NL Management Group may make recommendations to the CEO or designee about NL staffing needs and requirements.

Section 9. The NL Management Group, in consultation with the CEO of US Youth Soccer or designee, will submit a proposed annual budget in accordance with the US Youth Soccer Financial Policy.

Section 10. The NL shall be linked to the US Youth Soccer Policy on Players and Playing Rules, and US Youth Soccer National Championships Policy.

Section 11. The NL Management Group is authorized to settle any disputes which arise in the course of NL play. The NL Management Group, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of US Youth Soccer and US Soccer, will investigate and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by clubs, teams, coaches, players, or others involved in NL operations and will impose an appropriate sanction for any violation found. When an appeal of a NL Management Group decision is authorized, the appeal will be made to an Appeals Committee, appointed by the NL Management Group Chairperson or designee composed of no less than three (3) nor more than five (5) members, with the NL Management Group Chair or designee appointing one of the members as chair of the Appeals Committee.

Rule 104. OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE MANAGEMENT GROUP

Section 1. The Chairperson of the NL Management Group shall preside over all NL Management Group meetings and represent the NL Management Group.

Section 2. In the event of a vacancy in the NL Commissioner position, the CEO of US Youth Soccer, or a temporary designee, will assume general executive authority over the work of the NL Management Group and the NL and will supervise the work of all NL staff and volunteers.

Section 3. The NL Commissioner shall be responsible for making sure that all responsibilities assigned to the NL Management Group by this policy are performed. The NL Commissioner will faithfully perform all duties as detailed in his/her job description and tasks as assigned by the CEO of US Youth Soccer or designee.

Section 4. All NL staff, volunteers, individuals as part of groups as defined in Rule 103, Section 7, and others accountable to the NL Management Group will report to the NL Commissioner. The NL Commissioner will report to the CEO of US Youth Soccer.

Section 5. Each member of the NL Management Group, except as otherwise noted in this policy, shall have one vote on the NL Management Group.

Section 6. Except as provided in Sections 7 and 8 of this Rule, the NL Management Group may meet in formal session in person or by conference call on 24 hours notice. An agenda must be provided to the NL Management Group prior to the meeting.

Section 7. The NL Management Group may hold an emergency meeting with minimal advance notice as determined by the NL Commissioner, CEO of US Youth Soccer or designee, or a simple majority of the NL Management Group. Only matters needing immediate attention may be acted upon during an emergency meeting.

Section 8. The NL Management Group will meet by any agreeable means to reach agreement on some matter that must be resolved quickly. The decision will be placed on the agenda for the next formal meeting for ratification at that time. The Chairperson or his/her designee may also poll individual NL Management Group members on a matter where time is of the essence and the decision is final, provided each NL Management Group member was given a chance to vote on the matter.

Rule 105. NATIONAL LEAGUE STRUCTURE

Section 1. The tiers of competition within the US Youth Soccer National League shall be:

- (1) National tier.
- (2) Conference tier.

Section 2. On an annual basis, the NL Management Group shall determine the brand name of the two tiers of competition.

Section 3. On an annual basis, the NL Management Group shall determine the gender age groups and the number of teams in the National tier of competition.

Section 4. On an annual basis, the NL Management Group will have the authority to structure the NL, to establish the number of Conferences, the qualification procedures for teams and/or clubs into each tier, the team and/or club participation eligibility rules, to designate the seasons of play and team and/or club schedules.

Rule 106. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES

Section 1. In order to be eligible to advance to the US Youth Soccer National Championship finals, teams participating in the NL must also participate in their respective State level of competition in the current seasonal year.

Section 2. NL teams that qualify to represent the NL at the US Youth Soccer National Championship finals are not required to participate in the Regionals competition of the National Championship Series if the team qualifies for the Regionals as the State Association representative or a NL Conference League representative.

Section 3. For the National Championship finals, up to twelve (12) teams in each of the 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U, 18U and 19U gender age groups shall represent the NL in the Nationals Championship finals. If any of those teams is also a Regional Cup championship team, the team will represent the NL in the finals and not represent its region in the finals.

Section 4. If any NL team qualifying for the finals in a gender age group is determined to be ineligible to compete in the finals, the next eligible NL team in that gender age group will represent the NL in the finals in place of the ineligible team.

Rule 107. AMENDMENT OF POLICY

Section 1. The US Youth Soccer Board of Directors may amend or repeal this Policy at any time by a majority vote.

Section 2. Amendments to this policy are effective the day after approval by a majority vote of the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors.

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