

BAY STATE SOCCER LEAGUE

Constitution and By-Laws 2024

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CHAPTER 1 - ARTICLE OF ORGANIZATION

1.1 GENERAL

1.1.1 PURPOSE

The Bay State Soccer League ("BSSL") organizes, facilitates, administers and governs an amateur adult soccer organization.

1.1.2 DISTRIBUTION

A complete set of by-laws will be made available to each member team and affiliated associations. A copy will be supplied on request to any other group or individual that may interact with the BSSL. A copy of the by-laws shall be posted on the league's website and available for download.

1.1.3 HEADQUARTERS/MEETING ORGANIZATION

The headquarters of the BSSL will be within the Greater Metropolitan Boston area of Eastern Massachusetts. The BSSL shall hold a minimum of one meeting annually (the Annual) as well as any other meetings deemed necessary by the Executive Board.

1.1.4 VOLUNTARY NATURE OF OFFICE

Holding an office in the BSSL is strictly voluntary. No officer or director shall receive compensation of any type beyond reasonable reimbursement for expenses incurred by them on behalf of the BSSL.

1.1.5 MEMBERSHIP

Any amateur adult team agreeing to abide by the by-laws of the BSSL shall be eligible. Acceptance into the BSSL shall be at the sole and absolute discretion of the Executive Board. Failure by any team (or team's member) to abide by these by-laws may result in disciplinary action by the Executive Board, in its sole discretion, which may include (but not be limited to) expulsion from the BSSL of the team or team member.

1.1.6 FISCAL YEAR

Fiscal year to end on December 31 of each year.

1.2 CONSTITUENCY AND GOVERNING BODY

1.2.1 CONSTITUENCY

It is mandatory that at least one team member be in attendance for any BSSL meeting.

1.2.2 VOTING POWER

Each team will have one (1) vote. A Quorum must be maintained for all votes. A quorum is a simple majority of all teams in the BSSL.

1.2.3 EXECUTIVE BOARD/ELECTED OFFICERS

The constituency shall elect the following officers to comprise the Executive Board: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Referee/Game Coordinator, Webmaster, Immediate Past President, and one Division Director for each division. Elections will be held at the Annual Meeting and the term of office will be one (1) year. No person may hold more than two (2) officer positions concurrently and no officer shall cast more than one vote in Executive Board voting, regardless of the number of offices held. The Executive Board does not cast votes in league-wide voting although officers may vote as representatives of their teams.

1.2.4 BOARD DUTIES AND POWERS

The Executive Board shall be empowered to conduct the business of the BSSL (including governing and administering the league) between Annual Meetings. It may not authorize the assumption of liability. The Executive Board may set fees and administer and enforce fines and penalties for infractions of the then current BSSL By-Laws and FIFA Laws of the Game.

1.2.5 RESIGNATION OF OFFICERS

Upon the resignation of an officer prior to the completion of term, the Executive Board may appoint an interim officer until the next Annual Meeting.

1.2.6 OFFICERS' DUTIES, POWERS, AND REIMBURSEMENT

Officers shall perform the following duties and receive a reimbursement of expenses as indicated:

President (\$600):

1. Chair the Executive Board
2. Preside over all meetings
3. Act as the official representative to all external organizations
4. Cast a vote to break a tie
5. Assume duties delegated by the Executive Board
6. Draft season schedule and arrange details of the Cup final

Vice President (\$600):

1. Act as President when the President is absent or incapacitated
2. Preside over appeals and disciplinary committees
3. Act as new team coordinator
4. Organize and schedule Cup Competition

Immediate Past President:

1. Chair any meeting when the President and Vice President are unable to attend
2. Subject to availability and ability, assist the President as requested

Secretary (\$500):

1. Coordinate game schedules for BSSL and Cup play
2. Preside over all votes at meetings
3. Initiate all communications to members
4. Manage disciplinary investigations and hearings

Treasurer (\$400):

1. Maintain appropriate financial records and reports for the BSSL
2. Collect and disburse BSSL funds as authorized

Referee/Game Coordinator (\$500):

1. Maintain all intra-league records including weekly league tables
2. Manage rosters and game reports from teams and officials

Division Directors (\$300)

1. Act as the primary source of contact for division members
2. Maintain division records

Webmaster (\$500)

1. Maintain the BSSL web site (www.bssl.com)

1.2.7 HEARINGS COMMITTEE

The Hearings Committee will resolve protests and disputes that arise through BSSL Activity (BSSL Activity shall be determined to be any activity that occurs from the moment the first player arrives at the match facility until the last player leaves the match facility). The decisions of the Hearings Committee are final, subject to a petitioner's right to appeal as described herein.

1.2.7.1 Committee Membership

The Hearings Committee shall be comprised of any three unaffected Executive Board Members. The Secretary shall record and document the actions of the Hearings Committee. If a Hearings Committee member has a vested interest in the outcome of the protest, that member will be disqualified from participating ruling on that protest. Reasons for disqualification may include association with one of the teams or players involved in the protest, or association with a team that could benefit from the ruling in league standing or in some other way.

1.2.8 ANNUAL MEETING/FALL MEETING

All BSSL meetings shall be held at times and locations designated by the Executive Board. The Annual Meeting of the voting constituency of the BSSL shall be held prior to the start of the spring portion of the season. The order of business shall be as follows:

- 1.** Roll call of members
- 2.** Unfinished business
- 3.** Reports of officers
- 4.** Financial statement
- 5.** Committee Reports: Protest, New Teams, Division Protest, Fields
- 6.** Election of Officers
- 7.** Amendments of by-laws
- 8.** New business
- 9.** Adjournment

Attendance at the Annual Meeting is mandatory. Other BSSL meetings may be called and be mandatory. Failure of a team to attend a mandatory BSSL meeting will result in a fine of one hundred dollars (\$100). Teams failing to have representation at the meeting forfeit their right to appeal any vote taken at that meeting.

1.2.9 SPECIAL MEETING

Special Meetings may be called by a majority of the Executive Board, or by a majority of the constituency. The order of business shall be as follows:

- 1.** Roll call of members

2. Declaration of need for meeting
3. Discussion
4. Adjournment

1.2.10 METHOD OF VOTING

Each team shall be entitled to one (1) vote cast by the person delegated to represent that team. Any team representative may request a secret ballot for any vote and paper ballots will be provided for that vote.

1.2.11 CONSENT TO ACTION BY CONFERENCE CALL

Any meeting which may be required of the Executive Board or Hearings Committee may be conducted by conference call. As long as the respective members of the Executive Committee or Hearings Committee are present telephonically, any action taken during such meeting shall be deemed valid.

1.3 MISCELLANEOUS

1.3.1 AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS

Before entering into any material written agreement or contract with a third party the Executive Board will supply a copy to all members and receive approval by a majority of the membership.

1.3.2 AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

The amendment of these by-laws may only be done at the Annual meeting with the approval of a simple majority of the membership if a quorum is present.

CHAPTER 2 - RULES OF THE BSSL

2.1 ORGANIZATION

2.1.1 DIVISIONS

This League is divided into divisions based on point standings within the BSSL. Each division is coordinated by a division director.

2.1.2 TEAM PLACEMENT

Any team entering the League will be placed in the lowest division.

2.1.3 POINT STANDINGS

Point standings will be based on:

WIN = 3 points

TIE = 1 point

LOSS = 0 points

A forfeit will be recorded as a 3-0 score, with three points awarded to the winner and two points deducted from the forfeiting team.

Totals for the regular season games will determine the standings. In the event of a tie, the following will be used to determine the rank:

1. head-to-head competition between the tied teams
2. goal differential for the tied teams in league play
3. goal differential for the tied teams in head-to-head play
4. goals scored during league play

2.1.4 PROMOTION/RELEGATION

In order to ensure competitive soccer, the Executive Board will establish procedures for promotion of the top team or teams in each division and the relegation of the bottom team or teams. These procedures will be agreed upon by a simple majority vote at least two weeks prior to the scheduled start of the season. The following item also applies:

a) Any team may decline promotion once; consecutive finish results in a mandatory promotion. In the event that a team declines promotion the placement would then be offered to each subsequent team in order of their record.

2.1.5 SEASON/SCHEDULE

The season will be divided into two halves: spring, from the first week in April to the end of July; and fall, from the last week in August to the middle of November. Games shall be played on Saturdays beginning between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Additionally, games may be started between 4:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. with the approval of the away team manager and the division director/league official. The deadline for field assignment is two (2) weeks prior to the start of each half-season.

2.1.6 CUP PLAY

A Cup competition is scheduled for the entire BSSL at the Annual Meeting and will be played during the season. Rules for Cup games will be the same as regular BSSL matches except in cases of a tie. During the initial rounds up to and including the quarterfinals, a game that finishes in a tie will conclude with each team taking five (5) penalty shots. If the score is still tied, teams will take alternate sudden death penalty shots until a winner is determined. During the semifinal and final, two (2) fifteen-minute overtime periods will be played. If no goal is scored during overtime, each team will take five (5) penalty shots. If the score is still tied, teams will take alternate sudden death penalty shots until a winner is determined. Loss of game results in elimination from the Cup competition.

2.1.7 TEAM ADMITTANCE

Teams applying for admittance will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and rejected/recommended to the constituency. Unless opposed, admission will be granted based on available openings and agreement by the team to abide by BSSL By-Laws. New teams requesting admittance to the League must pay a \$100 non-refundable bond at the time of application. If the team is refused membership, the fee shall be refunded in full.

Each team must designate a team owner and a team manager. The team owner has financial responsibility and can keep the team name and current standing of the team, or do as he/she wishes with the name, as long as the team is in good financial standing with the League.

2.1.8 TEAM COMPOSITION

Rosters will be set at a maximum of thirty (30) active players. All players must be registered prior to participating in League play. Players cannot be registered with more than one team at the same time. All players must be at least 18 years of age. There is no minimum or maximum number of males or females required on each team. Team composition is entirely the right of each individual team to determine.

2.1.9 TRANSFERS/ADDITIONS

2.1.9.1 Additions to the Roster

Additions to a team's BSSL Roster will be handled through the website. To add a player, the team manager must enter the player's information via the appropriate section of the website and provide a valid MASS Soccer registration number for the player. A player is not authorized to play until confirmed by the BSSL. Once confirmed, the player's name will appear on the team's official BSSL Game Roster (see Section 2.3.4).

2.1.9.2 Transfers

A player who transfers between teams may not be transferred again to any team until two games have been played by both the old and the new teams. A player who appears on the roster for a Cup game for one team is ineligible to play in the Cup for any other team during that year. No players can be transferred after Week 6 of the Fall season.

2.1.10 TEAM RESIGNATIONS

Any team resigning from the League prior to the end of the season shall forfeit all games, points, and fees. Points for a team completing the first half of the season prior to resigning will be maintained in the standings. If a team resigns prior to completing either half season the games for that half season will be nullified and no points will be awarded. If a team resigns from the League within three weeks of the start of a half season or during a half season, its BSSL registered players are not eligible to play on another team in the League during that half season.

2.1.11 COMPLIANCE AND SANCTIONS

All teams in the League agree to abide by these by-laws

2.1.11.1 Infractions

Infractions of BSSL By-Laws or FIFA Laws of the Game will be subject to disciplinary action as recommended by the Hearings Committee.

2.1.11.2 Needs of the League

Failure of a team or team member to meet the needs of the BSSL (as determined by the Executive Board) may result in disciplinary action by the Executive Board. Continued non-compliance shall make the team or team member subject to further disciplinary action by the Executive Board, at its sole discretion, including, but not limited to: team or team member suspension, team fines, team point deduction, additional team red cards, team or team member probationary periods, or the expulsion of the team or team member from the BSSL. The constituency acknowledges and understands that certain situations may arise where the Executive Board is required to take immediate action to protect the interests of the BSSL and its members. The constituency agrees to abide by the rulings of the Executive Board (subject to the appeals provisions defined herein).

2.2 FEES AND COSTS

2.2.1 LEAGUE FEES

League administration costs will be set and confirmed by the constituency at the Annual Meeting. Appropriate team registration fees will be confirmed and paid by a deadline to be set by the Treasurer. The deadline will be at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of each half season. Teams failing to pay full fees and all accumulated fines, including failure to report score fines, will forfeit all games until the fees and fines are paid in full. This provision does not supersede Rule 2.2.2 regarding the referee forfeiture bond, that requires any use of this bond to be repaid within two weeks of the forfeited game, where failure to comply will result in forfeiting of all games until the bond is replenished.

2.2.2 FORFEITURE BOND

A forfeiture bond of \$210 will be paid by each team and held in escrow for referee payment should the team default and forfeit a game. Any use of this bond must be replenished by the forfeiting team within 2 weeks of the forfeit. Failure to comply will result in forfeiting of all games until the bond is replenished.

2.2.3 AFFILIATION

Cost of affiliation will be confirmed at the Annual Meeting.

2.2.4 REFEREE FEE

The referee fee is set and confirmed by the constituency at the Annual Meeting.

2.3 PRE-GAME RESPONSIBILITIES

2.3.1 SCHEDULE

It is the responsibility of the home team manager to confirm (by phone or email) the time and location of the game with the opposing manager at least seventy two (72) hours prior to the game.

2.3.2 FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

Each team is required to secure a permit for a home field on which to play all their scheduled home games. Teams may play on any FIFA approved surface. The field shall be a minimum of 100 yards in length with a width of not less than 50 yards. Minimum acceptable field markings will be side and goal lines, mid-field line, and penalty areas. Minimum field equipment will be goals and goal nets. The home team must provide two game balls of NFHS standard or higher.

2.3.2.1 Field Safety

All managers should determine the safety of the field before the game and should take into consideration the following factors: crowd control, police presence, if necessary, and condition of the field playing surface. Any manager who has a concern about the personal safety of his or her team has the right to request of the opposing team's manager to re-schedule the game at another time and/or field. If at any time during the game, an unsafe situation arises, a manager may request of the referee (whose decision is binding) and opposing manager to halt the game and finish play at another agreed upon time. It is ultimately the responsibility of the home team manager to assure the safety of the field/playing surface.

2.3.2.2 Field Location

In order to maintain the geographic integrity of the league, no BSSL team may schedule a home game at a field located greater than 70 minutes driving distance (as determined by Google Maps under ideal traffic conditions) from the Massachusetts State House in Boston. If the field is located greater than 60 minutes driving distance (as determined by Google Maps under ideal traffic conditions) from the Massachusetts State House in Boston, then the window specified in Section 2.1.5 in which games shall be played on Saturdays will be adjusted to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., except with the approval of the away team manager and the Division Director/League official.

2.3.3 UNIFORMS

Uniforms shall consist of uniform shirts of matching color with unique permanent numbers on the back. Shorts and socks, while not required to match exactly, should not create confusion as to which team the player is on. Teams should make an effort to coordinate shirt color in advance of the match. In the event of opposing teams having the same color shirt, it is the responsibility of the visiting team to change shirts. Players shall be allowed to wear spandex or other non-dangerous supporting material during BSSL games. All players are required to wear shin guards and appropriate footwear.

2.3.3.1 Alternate Shirt

Each team is required to own two (2) complete sets of distinctly colored uniform shirts. This will enable them to change shirts if their primary color conflicts with that of the home team. If the visiting team's shirt color conflicts with the primary color of the home team, the visiting team does not have an alternate set of shirts to change into, and no arrangement was made beforehand with the home team, then forfeit rules of section 2.3.9 will apply.

2.3.4 GAME ROSTERS AND PLAYER IDS

FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES PRIOR to kickoff, each manager will provide the referee and opposing team with an official printed BSSL Game Roster for their respective teams. Game Rosters are printed from the Mass Soccer website and list the first name, last name, shirt number, date of birth, and Mass Soccer registration number of every player authorized by the League to play for that team. The Game Roster must be presented to the referee exactly as supplied by the League and WITHOUT ALTERATION to any of the players' names. However, alternative shirt numbers may be written on the Game Roster if necessary. Prior to the start of the game, each player listed on the Game Roster must also produce a form of identification consistent with those listed as acceptable on the Game Roster with which the referee can confirm their identity.

All rosters submitted by teams must correspond to the roster available online at Mass Soccer. Any submitted rosters that do not correspond to the roster available on Mass Soccer shall be deemed ineligible and the team shall forfeit the game.

2.3.4.1 Use of Ineligible Players

Any player who does not appear on the official printed Game Roster, or who cannot present a form of identification consistent with those listed as acceptable on the Game Roster prior to entering the game, or who is currently under suspension by the League is considered INELIGIBLE. Presenting a digital roster to an official shall not be permitted. Any team found using an ineligible player will be penalized with the following guidelines:

In any situation where a player does not originally appear on and/or is written into a game roster, the team will forfeit the game. If a player is registered to the team but does not appear on the printed game roster and plays in the game then the team must forfeit the game and be issued a penalty of -2 points.

If the player is not registered to their team in the BSSL and is not on the game day roster then the team will forfeit the game and 10 points.

If an unregistered player attempts to use a card that is not their own, then the team will forfeit the game and 10 points, plus the player whose card was used would be suspended for 5 games.

If an already suspended player plays in a game, then the team will forfeit the game and lose 6 points and the suspension of the already suspended player will be lengthened by 5 games.

In any instance that occurs as outlined above, then the team will also be assessed a \$200 fine.

Any situations under the guidelines will be discussed by the Executive Board to determine the best course of action according to Rule 2.1.11.2 (Needs of the League).

2.3.4.2 Use of an Unofficial Game Roster

Any team which attempts to use a game roster other than the official printed BSSL Game Roster as defined in Rule 2.3.4 (Game Rosters and Player IDs) will forfeit the game and be fined \$50. Repeated offenses are subject to an Executive Board hearing which may result in additional fines and/or point deductions as deemed appropriate by the Executive Board, in their sole discretion.

2.3.5 TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING REFEREES

2.3.5.1 Referee Fee

The game fee is \$100 for the referee and \$50 for each of the two assistant referees, totaling \$200. Prior to the beginning of the game, each team will give the referee one-half of the referees' fees (\$100). The League will pay for the referee and the two assistant referees for the Cup Semifinals and the Cup Final. The League will also pay for the referees' fees for the promotion/relegation playoff games.

2.3.5.2 Referee Notification

It is the home team's responsibility to communicate any field or time change with the referee assignor no less than seventy two (72) hours before the game. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit of the game.

2.3.5.3 Protests of a Referee Fee Payment

Protests concerning payment of a referee's fee are to be submitted to the Hearings Committee for resolution.

2.3.6 CANCELLATION

If the referee declares the field unplayable (for any reason other than those described in 2.3.2) BEFORE the game starts, the game is considered to be cancelled and must be rescheduled by the team managers for a later date. See Rule 2.3.7.2 (Rescheduling a Cancelled or Abandoned Game).

If the game is cancelled by the referee before the start due to an unplayable field, the referee and the assistant referees (if present) are entitled to half of their normal fee, paid by both teams. However, the referee may not cancel a game more than fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled start time and must ensure that both team managers are aware of the decision.

In cases where games are cancelled ahead of time because of field closure, it is the home team's responsibility to notify the referee, assistant referees, and Referee Assignor a minimum of two hours before the scheduled start time. Referees and assistant referees who arrive at the field because they were not informed of a cancellation are entitled to receive half of their normal fee, paid by the home team.

The notification mentioned above must be via one of the following methods:

1. Email as long as there is a return email confirming that the cancellation notice was received and/or
2. A phone call, preferably talking to the other person or having them return your call to confirm that they received the cancellation notice.

2.3.6.1 Abandoned Games

A game is considered to be abandoned when halted by the referee after kickoff due the condition of the playing field or its surroundings, or due to weather conditions.

Any red cards awarded in a game which is subsequently abandoned will stand.

If the referee abandons the game before the start of the second half, the game must be rescheduled and replayed as if it had never started.

If the referee abandons the game after the second half has commenced, the remaining portion of the game must be rescheduled and played to completion at a later date. The rescheduled portion of the game commences with the score as it was at the point of abandonment. Only players who were eligible to play in the abandoned game may play in the rescheduled portion.

2.3.6.2 Abandoned Games as the result of unsafe environments caused by teams or individuals

If at any point before the completion of a game, the officials decide that they can no longer continue due to perceived fears for their safety, the safety of players, or the general public within the vicinity of the game then the team(s) founds responsible as a result of Executive Board investigation shall be punished accordingly.

If one team is deemed responsible based on the referee's report then that team shall receive a team red card, forfeit the game, be deducted 6 points, and receive a \$200 fine.

If both teams are deemed responsible per the referee report then the game will be a double forfeit and both teams will be punished as outlined above.

Any named players deemed to be responsible for the abandonment of the game shall receive a red card and a suspension of no less than 3 games. Any suspension may be increased at the sole discretion of the Executive Board.

2.3.7 RESCHEDULING

Rescheduling of a game presents particular problems and should only be done with good reason. A lack of players on game day is not an acceptable reason to reschedule a game. All rescheduled games must be rescheduled within fourteen (14) days of the originally scheduled match (this includes notification to the respective Division Director of the rescheduled date, time, and location of the match which will result in the assignment of officials) and must be played before the end of the half-season in which the original game was scheduled. If a match is not rescheduled within the fourteen-day period described above, the BSSL will assign a date on which the home team must provide a field for the game to be played. If within another seven (7) days the home team cannot confirm a field and time, the BSSL will unilaterally and in its sole discretion establish a time and location for the match on the first Saturday following the end of the respective half-season the match is in. The BSSL will secure a field for the match and the home team shall be responsible for the field rental (any costs above the home teams own cost of rental shall be split equally between the two teams). Should either team fail to appear for the match, a forfeit will be awarded and appropriate penalties applied (as described herein).

2.3.7.1 Prior Knowledge of the Need to Reschedule

If a team is aware in advance that it will be unable to play a regularly scheduled game, the game may be rescheduled with three (3) weeks prior notice to the opposing team manager, Division Director, and Referee Assignor. If the rescheduling is requested by the visiting team, the home team has the right to ask the visiting team to provide (and pay for) a field for the rescheduled game. Any rescheduling of the match must be completed according to section 2.3.7 above.

2.3.7.2 Rescheduling a Cancelled or Abandoned Game

In the event that a game must be rescheduled due to cancellation or abandonment, the rescheduling must be completed according to section 2.3.7 above.

2.3.8 REFEREE NO-SHOW

Any referee or assistant referee who fails to arrive within fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled kick-off is not entitled to a fee. In the absence of the referee, one of the assistant referees may assume the responsibilities of referee and be entitled to the referee fee. If no referees are present fifteen minutes after the scheduled kick-off, at the discretion of both of the opposing managers a referee or referees may be appointed and the match played. Alternatively, the managers may mutually elect to re-schedule the match.

2.3.9 TEAM FORFEIT

If within fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled kick-off time, but before the game commences, the referee determines that a team is unable to play due to an insufficient number of eligible players, unsuitable uniforms, inadequate player equipment, or unsuitable field preparation, the team will forfeit the match. The referee and assistant referees are entitled to their game fees, to be paid in full by the forfeiting team. If neither team is able to satisfy these conditions for play, then each team will pay its half of the referee fees and each receive a forfeit. No match shall commence more than fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled kick-off time unless mutually agreed to by both managers and the officials.

2.3.9.1 Forfeiture Penalties

A team forfeit in a BSSL game shall result in an automatic two-point deduction. Additionally, a team forfeit in a BSSL game or a Cup game shall result in a fine of according to the following pay structure:

First Game: \$100

Second Game: \$100

Third Game: \$200 + automatic one-year probation if the team continues in the BSSL.

Subsequent Matches: \$200

Any team assessed three (3) forfeits, including Cup games, during one full season, shall be subject to suspension or dismissal from the League. Payment of any penalties assessed under this by-law must be paid under the two-week deadline outlined in 2.2.2.

2.3.10 DELAYED START

If the start of the game is delayed (but in no event longer than fifteen (15) minutes) the home team may ask the referee to shorten the halftime break as necessary to complete the game on schedule. However, the minimum halftime break shall not be less than five (5) minutes.

2.3.11 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONSUMPTION

The consumption of alcoholic beverages before, during, or after a game is banned unless specific permission is given by the home team's manager.

2.3.12 Code of Conduct

No participant shall:

Physically attack any participant, official or spectator. This includes but is not limited to threatening to or actually striking, shoving, kicking or otherwise touching or subjecting another person with physical contact in a threatening or alarming manner.

Use obscene language or gestures, harassing, insulting, taunting or challenging language, racial, ethnic or sexual slurs, or unsportsmanlike demonstrations whether towards another player or as an act of dissent concerning an official's decision.

Use unnecessary roughness or attempt to injure an opposing player during or after play.

Throw or cause to be deposited any unnecessary object onto the field of play.

Violate any applicable open container ordinance, or other state or local alcohol or drug laws, while at a sports venue, or enter the field of play while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Display other unsportsmanlike conduct before or after games or events, or while at a sports venue during a scheduled activity, game, match or event.

2.4 GAME RULES

2.4.1 FIFA

All League games including Cup games shall be played in accordance with the current FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) Laws of the Game, except as may be amended by the BSSL By-Laws.

2.4.2 SUBSTITUTIONS

Free substitution will be allowed at goals, goal kicks, and half time. A team may also substitute during their own throw-in and during the opposing team's throw-in if the opposing team substitutes at that time. If play is stopped due to injury or if a player receives a yellow card, the injured or carded player may be substituted and the opposing team may elect to match this substitution.

2.4.3 CONDUCT

Penalties for misconduct are as follows:

2.4.3.1 Player Penalty

For the purposes of this rule, no distinction is made between regular BSSL games and Cup games.

Any player receiving a red card is suspended for the next game.

Any player receiving a red card for Violent Conduct, Spitting, or Serious Foul Play as formally noted in the Referee's Report is suspended for the next three (3) games and is subject to additional Executive Board disciplinary action which may include further suspension or dismissal from the BSSL.

Any player receiving a second red card in a season is suspended for the next three (3) games (except if the second red card is for Violent Conduct, Spitting, or Serious Foul Play in which case the additional suspension shall be for an additional three (3) games for a total of six (6) games).

Any player receiving a third red card in a season is suspended for the next five (5) games and is subject to additional Executive Board disciplinary action which may include further suspension or dismissal from the BSSL (except if the third red card is for Violent Conduct, Spitting, or Serious Foul Play in which case the additional suspension shall be for an additional three (3) games for a total of eight (8) games).

Suspensions in effect at the end of the season will be carried over and served at the start of the following season. Changing teams will not void the suspension.

Any player receiving a red card who gives a false name or who refuses to leave the field will be dismissed from the BSSL.

2.4.3.2 Team Penalty

The number of red cards received by a team each full season during regular BSSL games will be tallied, and will affect the team's standing in the BSSL as described below. The first red card a team receives each season in a Cup game will not be counted in this tally, but subsequent cards received in Cup games during that season will.

Any team receiving three (3) red cards will have the number of points equivalent to a win deducted from their division standings.

For every additional red card received by a team, the number of points equivalent to a win will be deducted from their division standings.

Any team receiving a total of five (5) red cards in a season will be subject to Executive Board disciplinary action, which may include suspension or dismissal from the League.

In the event of a team brawl where the referee is unable to obtain the facts both teams will be issued at least two red cards and a minimum fine of \$200. Note: the Executive Board will determine if this law is pertinent to a game but these are minimum repercussions. Furthermore, the Executive Board shall have the discretion to assess penalties and sanctions in its sole discretion for acts by teams or team members that are not specifically discussed elsewhere in the By-Laws.

2.4.3.3 Expulsion Penalty

Expulsion is defined as an order given by the referee to someone to leave the field of play and its surroundings, including the sideline or substitutes' bench, during a game. Someone who is expelled from a game may give instructions to a chosen replacement before leaving the field of play and its surroundings but must not further influence the game in any way.

If the expelled person is a registered player, the expulsion will count as an individual red card as defined in Rule 2.4.3.1 (Player Penalty).

If the expelled person is not a registered player, the expulsion will count as a team red card. The expelled person will be banned from the field of play, sideline, and substitutes' bench for one (1) game and is subject to additional Executive Board disciplinary action which may include further suspension, team fines, or team dismissal from the BSSL.

2.5 POST-GAME

2.5.1 GAME REPORT

All game scores, number of red cards (including the name of the player(s) carded), and incidents will be reported via the BSSL website or directly to the Secretary within 48 hours (including make-up games) by both team managers. If a game is forfeited or re-scheduled both managers must still contact the Division Director by 8 p.m. on the day the game was originally scheduled to be played. Failure to submit a game report will result in a twenty dollar (\$20) fine.

2.5.2 HEARINGS

A team may request a hearing for any action resulting from BSSL activity. To be considered an official hearing request, the hearing request must be sent in writing by email to the President by the second business day following the game's end or notification of punishment causing the hearing request. A \$200 fee payable to the BSSL must accompany all hearing requests. If the hearing request is upheld, this fee will be refunded. A hearing request is considered to be upheld if the Hearings Committee changes any part of the original ruling.

The Hearings Committee ruling will be delivered as soon as possible once all necessary information has been gathered and discussed.

2.5.2.1 Red Card Protests

For hearing requests involving a red card, if the Hearings Committee has not made a ruling by the start time of the first game in the player's suspension period AND the request was received at least 48 hours before the start time of the game, the suspended player may play in that game and any subsequent games until the Hearings Committee makes its ruling. If the Hearings Committee subsequently upholds the suspension, the suspension period recommences with the game which immediately follows the ruling.

2.5.2.2 Hearings Committee Appeals

A team may make a one-time appeal of a Hearings Committee ruling. Such appeals are allowed only when a team believes the BSSL By-Laws or the FIFA Laws of the Game were misapplied, or if significant additional evidence relevant to the original hearing issue becomes available. Whenever possible, the appeal will be heard by three different members of the Executive Board (who did not participate in the original hearing), subject to maintaining three unaffected voting members. The Hearings Committee ruling appeal must be sent in writing to the President within one week of the initial ruling, accompanied by a \$75 fee payable to the BSSL. If the appeal is upheld, both this fee and

the fee submitted with the original hearing request will be refunded. If still unsatisfied with the ruling a team may appeal any BSSL ruling to the Massachusetts State Soccer Association.

2.6 REFEREES

BSSL games are officiated by one referee and two assistant referees.

2.6.1 REFEREE REQUIREMENTS

Referees are requested to be at the game twenty (20) minutes before kick-off time to complete field and equipment inspections prior to kick-off. If the field is not properly lined and equipped, the official may decide not to play the game. If he is willing to play the game his comment should be noted on the Game Report and both managers must agree.

Fifteen (15) minutes before kick-off the referee should inspect players for uniforms and shin guards and match the identity of each player against the names listed on the Game Roster by checking a valid driving license, passport, or some equivalent government-issued picture ID.

2.6.2 REFEREE EVALUATIONS

Referee evaluation data is collected via the score reporting form on the BSSL website.

2.7 COMPLIANCE AND SANCTIONS

Compliance with the BSSL By-Laws is mandatory and sanctions will be administered by the Executive Board in their sole discretion.