

TRAVEL DIVISION POLICY

1) CLUB OPERATIONS

- a) Travel Program – SYSA is a member of three travel soccer leagues: the National Capital Soccer League (NCSL) for boys the Washington Area Girls Soccer League (WAGSL) for girls and the Old Dominion Soccer League (ODSL) for boys and girls. Under special circumstances and with BOD approval, individual travel teams may elect to participate in other leagues. SYSA travel teams will follow all the rules and procedures of its participating league. In addition, SYSA travel teams and travel coaches will abide by all the rules, procedures and guidelines outlined in this policies and procedures manual. Recruitment of players, carded or selected, from an existing SYSA travel team is prohibited.
- b) The number of travel players participating in SYSA will be limited to the number of fields available to SYSA. In general, SYSA will form four teams per gender, per age group in the U9-U12 age groups (two FC Elite Black and two FC Orange) and two teams per gender per age group in U13-U19 (one FC Elite Black and one FC Orange.) The Board of Directors may approve additional teams in an age group.
- c) Any SYSA Officer or Board Member that has a child or relative eligible to play travel soccer for SYSA shall be recused from any vote that involves the age group for which said child or relative is eligible to play.

2) CLUB PROGRAMS

- a) SYSA has two options within the travel program umbrella, 1) FC Orange Program, 2) FC Black Elite Program. The FC Orange Program is a volunteer based program of coaches. The FC Elite Black Program is a paid professional program of coaches and trainers. Unless otherwise stated all SYSA Policy and Procedures as they apply to the overall Travel Program apply to both arms of the travel program.

3) REGISTRATION

- a) Travel team registration for the fall and spring seasons will take place after all tryouts have been completed. All players must register with SYSA and pay a registration fee prior to being rostered. The SYSA fee will be determined annually and will cover all league fees and VYSA insurance requirements. In addition, SYSA travel teams and travel coaches must abide by all the rules, procedures and guidelines outlined in this policies and procedures manual. All players who are rostered on an SYSA travel team are registered SYSA members and agree to abide by the club's and their respective leagues bylaws, and policies & procedures.
- b) SYSA will register and fund all teams in the appropriate leagues.
- c) Medical release forms for all travel players must be signed by the parent/legal guardian for all travel players. Medical release forms are to be present at all games and practice sessions.
- d) Player, Parent, and Coaches Code of Conduct Forms must be completed, signed, and present at every game that a team participates.

4) TRAVEL COACH REQUIREMENTS AND SELECTION

- a) SYSA's travel team coaches are expected to meet high standards for knowledge of the rules, tactics and techniques of the game; work effectively and positively with travel team players; and interact effectively and positively with travel team parents, other coaches and club/league administrators. SYSA stresses the coach's ability to create a positive experience for travel players, focused on individual development and the ability to teach age appropriate soccer skills, and not focus on the team's win-loss record.

i) FC ORANGE RISING U9 TEAMS

(1) Requirements:

- (a) Must pass the Kid Safe background check under SYSA guidelines.
- (b) Must have the newly implemented (January 2013) USSF E or higher. Equivalent license/certifications or coaching experience to those referenced above will be considered with review by the VP of Travel, approval of which shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- (c) Must demonstrate a full understanding of the SYSA Travel Policy.
- (d) Must sign a coaching agreement stating they understand and will abide by all policies set forth by SYSA or may be subject to dismissal.
- (e) Must sign an agreement stating they will obtain the USSF D License before the beginning of the U12 season, understanding that they will be removed as head coach if this certification is not received.
- (f) Applications for volunteer coaches for the U9 season will be due by February 28 of the U8 season.
- (g) The VP of Travel and/or Director of Training and Coaching will review all applications submitted and may conduct personal interviews with applicants to verify information submitted on the application and to gather additional information if necessary.
- (h) Accepted applicants will be interviewed at the March Board of Directors meeting.
- (i) The Board of Directors will appoint the head coaches of the STER FC Orange teams.
- (j) If applicable, in April, a parent's forum will be held, under the direction of the VP of Travel. The forum will be a Q&A session for the appointed volunteer coaches.

ii) FC ELITE BLACK RISING U9 TEAMS

(1) Requirements:

- (a) Must pass the Kid Safe background check under SYSA guidelines.
- (b) Must have the newly implemented (January 2013) USSF E or higher. Equivalent license/certifications or coaching experience to those referenced above will be considered with review by the VP of Travel, approval of which shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- (c) Must demonstrate a full understanding of the SYSA Travel Policy.
- (d) Must sign a coaching agreement stating they understand and will abide by all policies set forth by SYSA or may be subject to dismissal.
- (e) Must sign an agreement stating they will obtain the USSF D License before the beginning of the U12 season, understanding that they will be removed as head coach if this certification is not received.
- (f) In April, a parent's forum will be held, under the direction of the VP of Travel. The forum will be a Q&A session for the appointed paid coaches.

- (g) An individual approved travel coach may coach two travel teams within SYSA with Board of Director's approval and a recommendation by the VP of Travel and/or the Director of Training and Coaching. Special circumstance must be documented in the Board of Directors meeting minutes.

5) COACH REMOVAL

- a) The Board of Directors has the authority to remove at any time with or without cause any travel coach at any time. Travel coaches understand that the head coach position is "at will" and for no definite period of time. Either SYSA Board of Directors or the head coach may terminate the coaching position at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice. SYSA approved coaches further understand that the head coach position is "at will" regardless of any statement made by an SYSA representative or in an SYSA policy, practice, handbook, program or any other written or oral material. A head coach understands that no other representative of SYSA, other than the Board of Directors, has the authority to make agreements with a head coach concerning the length of a head coach position. The Board of Directors acts with prudence before undertaking to review a travel team coach's conduct.
- b) There are four grounds for automatic removal of a travel team coach:
 - i) Debarment or suspension by the league in which the travel team plays, by the VYSA, or by another recognized youth soccer association.
 - ii) The travel team coach can apply for reinstatement at such time as a suspension terminates; however, the suspension must be identified at the time of application for reinstatement.
 - iii) Any inappropriate physical contact or actions unbecoming of a coach with a team player or parent, whether in anger or otherwise.
 - iv) Fraud or other intentional misuse or misappropriation of team funds.
 - v) Failing to comply and/or pass Kid Safe compliance. Any felony conviction or any child related conviction occurring after the Kid Safe annual review will be grounds for immediate removal.
- c) The following conduct or situations may, at the discretion of the VP of Travel, be brought to the Board for review:
 - i) Inappropriate or abusive verbal, emotional or psychological conduct directed at any team member or a parent/guardian;
 - ii) Inappropriate conduct toward the public, league administrators, referees, club or tournament officials, or SYSA administrators;
 - iii) A pattern of yellow or red cards or other disciplinary action by the league. A pattern may be considered two yellow cards or a single red card.
 - iv) A pattern in which the travel team "fails to thrive." This does not mean a pattern of losing. Rather, a team which consistently suffers player attrition; a team which experiences frequent and numerous parental complaints; a team which persistently fails to meet appropriate goals and expectations for a SYSA travel team – *i.e.*, players not having an enjoyable experience; players not growing in self-esteem and self-confidence; players not learning to play within a team concept; players not learning the skills appropriate for their age group and level of play – are all examples of behaviors or situations which, at the discretion of the VP of Travel, may be brought to the Board for review.

6) COACHES – ANNUAL REVIEW

- a) The VP of Travel and/or Director of Training and Coaching may conduct an annual review of the travel coaches of both programs through the use of a rating system questionnaire/survey that is completed by the parents of all travel teams.
- b) Any individual coach may obtain information relating to his/her performance by requesting this information in writing from the VP of Travel; however, under no circumstances will specific names and contact information be provided to the requesting coach as to protect the confidentiality of the submission and to ensure the integrity of the SYSA system. The purpose of this evaluation is to identify areas of success; as well, areas for improvement to head off any potential problems and issues of the travel teams. It is not the intention of this annual review to remove a coach due to a low rating unless there is a clear demonstration of low ratings for any particular coach.

7) COACHES – VACANCIES

- a) An existing travel head coach cannot re-assign the head coaching responsibilities to anyone. The assignment or re-assignment of a head coach may only be accomplished through an action of the SYSA Board of Directors.
- b) The President of SYSA may appoint or re-assign a head coach provided that the appointment is on an interim basis and the appointment is deemed immediate and necessary for the positive enrichment of the team.
 - i) Should such an appointment be made by the President it shall be on an interim basis until the appointment can be ratified by a quorum of the currently seated Board members at the next regular SYSA Board meeting.
 - ii) The appointment may be outside the requirements set-forth in Section 4 –Travel Coach Requirements and Selection, but only on an interim basis until a suitable replacement can be found.
- c) If an appointed volunteer travel coach leaves the team or is unable to perform the duties incumbent on a head coach at their specified level, the team will be moved into the FC Elite Black program unless a suitable, qualified, volunteer head coach is found. FC Elite Black coaches will be replaced by the contracted soccer organization and ratified by a quorum of the currently seated Board members at the next regular SYSA Board meeting. Once a team is moved into the FC Elite Black program, it shall remain as part of the FC Elite Black program for the remainder of the current seasonal year.
- d) When replacing an existing FC Orange travel coach, the VP of Travel and/or Director of Training and Coaching, in addition to appointing an interim head coach until a replacement can be appointed by the SYSA Board of Directors, will notify all SYSA coaches within the genders age group and actively search to fill open and new head coaching positions.
- e) The VP of Travel and/or Director of Training and Coaching will recommend coaches to the Board of Directors who will vote to accept or reject the candidate(s.) The VP of Travel will notify the candidate selected as the new travel coach, as well as all other applicants, of the Board decision. It shall also be the responsibility of the VP of travel to notify every player's parents or legal guardian(s) regarding actions associated with this section.
- f) The approved contracted Soccer Organization may replace head coaches within the FC Elite Black at their discretion with approval from the VP of Travel with ratification by a quorum of the currently seated Board members at the next SYSA regular Board meeting. SYSA may also request that a FC Elite Black coach be replaced if they are in any violation as stated within SYSA Policy.

8) TEAM FORMATION AND TRYOUTS

a) FC ORANGE PROGRAM

- i) In general, a maximum of two (2) FC Orange teams per gender may be formed in each age group U9-U12. At the completion of the U12 season, if two teams exist, the volunteer coach that the Board of Directors designates as the FC Orange coach or "A" coach, will be offered the position of head coach and hold tryouts to form one team. The FC White coach or "B" coach will be offered the assistant coaching position. There shall be one FC Orange program team per gender from age groups U13-U19, unless otherwise approved by the Board of Directors. FC Orange teams will adopt the following naming conventions: the first team shall be named the STER FC Orange XX (xx is the team year). In the event, a second team is formed the team name shall be STER FC White XX. Teams may add an additional name at the coach's discretion (e.g. United, Sting Rays, Lions, etc.), with the exception of the "Elite", as long as it is not considered derogatory or offensive.
- ii) All travel teams must comply with their respective leagues (ODSL, NCSL, WAGS) regarding tryouts.
- iii) In conjunction with the travel coach(s) in each age group and gender, the VP of Travel will establish tryout sessions for each group between the spring and fall seasons each year. The time and place of each tryout session will be advertised prior to the tryout date. SYSA will offer tryouts for both FC Orange (volunteer) and FC Black (paid) programs at different times in order to give all players the option of which program best fits their needs. Players may be offered positions in both programs and it will be their decision in what program they wish to participate.
- iv) The FC Orange/White program will hold a unified tryout. The first pool of players will be considered for the FC Orange team; while the second pool of players will be considered for the White team (assuming the player pool is sufficient.) The FC Orange coach has final decision within the FC Orange/White program.
- v) Tryouts for a new seasonal year (held approximately towards the end of the spring season) will be arranged by SYSA and the coach of said age group and shall occur over at least two days. The head coach of the FC Orange has full discretion over tryouts and may conduct them per their requirements. The FC White (if player pool permits) will follow the regimen of the Orange head coach.
- vi) Teams may hold open tryouts and/or invite individuals for tryouts following the completion of the fall season to aid their roster. Invitations cannot violate travel league recruiting rules or be held for current SYSA travel players without explicit consent from the existing coach of the player in question. Players may not be removed from a roster involuntarily during the seasonal year unless the reason for removal is enacted by Section 9.b of this Policy.
- vii) Player Selection
 - (1) Players will be notified within 48 hours of the completion of the last posted tryout. The head coach of the FC Orange teams will notify all players of their offer for either the Orange or the White team. Notification may be via any means (i.e. in person, phone, email, text, web posting.)
 - (2) Players offered positions will have four (4) calendar days to either accept or reject the offer of placement on a SYSA travel team. In the event that a player has not responded affirmative acceptance after the time period specified, the head coach, at his/her sole discretion, may offer the position to the next qualified player or hold the position open until acceptance is received or a qualified player can be found.

- (3) Selection of Players for a team shall be completed within seven (7) calendar days of the last tryout session within that age group. In rare occasions this process may be extended by the VP of Travel based on extenuating circumstances presented by the head coach within the age group and recommended by the Director of Training and Coaching.
- (4) In the event there are not a sufficient number of players remaining in the original tryout player pool within an age group to justify the formation of the team a second team, the formation may not occur. All candidates and parents and/or guardians of candidates shall be notified (individually or as a group) of their team status within a reasonable time period.

b) FC BLACK ELITE PROGRAM

- i) As a standard one (1) FC Black Elite team per gender may be formed in each age group. Additional teams may be formed more if interest exists. Board approval is required for more than two (2) teams in ages groups U9-U12 and for more than one (1) team in ages U13-U19. FC Black Elite teams will adopt the following naming conventions: the first team shall be named the Sterling FC Elite Black XX (xx is the team year). In the event, a second team is formed the team name shall be Sterling FC Elite Silver XX.
- ii) All travel teams must comply with their respective leagues (ODSL, NCSL, WAGS) regarding tryouts.
- iii) In conjunction with the travel coach(s) in each age group and gender, the VP of Travel will establish tryout sessions for each group between the spring and fall seasons each year. The time and place of each tryout session will be advertised prior to the tryout date. SYSA will offer tryouts for both FC Orange (volunteer) and FC Black Elite (paid) programs at different times in order to give all players the option of which program best fits their needs. Players may be offered positions in both programs and it will be their decision in what program they wish to participate.
- iv) The FC Black/Silver program will hold a unified tryout. The first pool of players will be considered for the FC Elite Black team; while the second pool of players will be considered for the FC Elite Silver team (assuming the player pool is sufficient.) The FC Elite Black coach has final decision within the FC Black/Silver program.
- v) Tryouts for a new seasonal year (held approximately towards the end of the spring season) will be arranged by SYSA and the coach of said age group and shall occur over at least two days. The head coach of the FC Elite Black has full discretion over tryouts and may conduct them per their requirements. The FC Elite Silver (if player pool permits) will follow the regiment of the Elite Black head coach.
- vi) Teams may hold open tryouts and/or invite individuals for tryouts following the completion of the fall season to aid their roster. Invitations cannot violate travel league recruiting rules or be held for current SYSA travel players without explicit consent from the existing coach of the player in question.
- vii) Player Selection
 - (1) Players will be notified within 48 hours of the completion of the last posted tryout. The head coach of the FC Elite Black teams will notify all players of their offer for either the Elite Black or the Elite Silver team. Notification may be via any means (i.e. in person, phone, email, text, web posting.)
 - (2) Players offered positions will have four (4) calendar days to either accept or reject the offer of placement on a SYSA travel team. In the event that a player has not responded with affirmative acceptance after the time period specified, the head coach, at his/her

sole discretion, may offer the position to the next qualified player or hold the position open until acceptance is received or a qualified player can be found.

- (3) Selection of Players for a team shall be completed within seven (7) calendar days of the last tryout session within that age group. In rare occasions this process may be extended by the VP of Travel based on extenuating circumstances presented by the head coach within the age group and recommended by the Director of Training and Coaching.
- (4) In the event there are not a sufficient number of players remaining in the original tryout player pool within an age group to justify the formation of the team a second team, the formation may not occur. All candidates and parents and/or guardians of candidates shall be notified (individually or as a group) of their team status within a reasonable time period.

9) PLAYER PARTICIPATION AND REMOVAL

- a) Participation
 - i) Notwithstanding any other league rules and policies, i.e. WAGSL, NCSL or ODSL, players ages U9-U11 are considered developmental and each player who attends the majority of practices will play in all regular seasonal league games. The head coach determines the amount of playing time. If a player is being disciplined for an infraction of league, association or team rules, then the first sentence of this section shall not apply. There are no specific guidelines for player participation in the U13 to U19 age groups. The head coach has full discretion on play time.
- b) Removal
 - i) Because the purpose of SYSA soccer is player development, players selected to an SYSA travel team shall not be removed involuntarily or voluntarily under duress from that team's roster between the fall and spring season. The VP of Travel, upon a showing of reasonable cause by the team's coach, may grant variance from this policy. Violation of this policy will subject the coach to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. The VP of Travel shall be notified regarding any violation of this section.

10) PLAY-UP RULES AND RECRUITING OTHER SYSA PLAYERS

- a) SYSA will follow the individual travel leagues policies and procedures regarding play-up rules.
- b) Regardless of other club policies, SYSA travel coaches may not solicit players from other SYSA travel teams for play up unless such request is for the sole participation in a VYSA approved or sanctioned tournament for which the players existing team is not registered for or participating in, nor registered in a competing tournament. In the event of such solicitation the soliciting coach must contact the existing players head coach and the VP of travel in advance of making contact with a player to ensure that the players' participation does not present a conflict for the players existing team. SYSA travel coaches may solicit SYSA recreational league players at anytime. Nothing in the policy shall prevent a player or a player's parent or legal guardian from contacting an existing SYSA coach in the same or older age group to inquire about play in a tournament or other action that the players' team is not participating in.

11) CLUB PASS PARTICIPATION

- a) SYSA teams, at the discretion of the head coaches may participate in any club pass program offered by WAGS, NCSL, etc. The club pass program allows players in the same age group to play for different teams within the club. If a team participates in the program, they are required to follow the appropriate leagues rules and policies of said program. SYSA encourages club pass play across the FC Orange and FC Elite Black programs within the various leagues rules and policies.

12) TRAINERS AND PAID COACHES FOR FC ORANGE PROGRAM

- a) SYSA permits paid trainers. Trainers are the responsibility of the individual teams. Paid coaches are not permitted within the FC Orange program. SYSA holds no financial liability for FC Orange teams that hire an individual trainer. FC Orange teams cannot hire any Soccer Organization or company that provides soccer related services unless approved by the SYSA Board of Directors. Only individual trainers may be hired and they must pass the Kid Safe background check required by SYSA annually.
- b) Trainers hired by SYSA teams may not solicit or recruit SYSA travel players to other teams that said trainers are affiliated with in any way. In the event that solicitation or recruitment is suspected, the trainer may be summoned to appear before the SYSA Rules and Discipline Committee and subject to disciplinary action and/or removal.

Any coach or trainer which, in the opinion of the VP of Travel, attempts to circumvent this policy by providing excessive gratuities to an otherwise unpaid volunteer coach or paid trainer, or by misrepresenting the actual role of the paid professional person as a coach will be subject to disciplinary action, including removal .

13) PRACTICES, OFF-SEASON, EQUIPMENT AND SPONSERS

- a) In-season practices will be held on designated practice fields and areas and at such times as assigned and approved by the VP of Travel and/or the SYSA Fields Manager. No changes to practice location, days or times will be made without prior approval of the VP of Travel and/or SYSA Fields Manager.
- b) Practices may be held on private facilities as designated by the coach and will be at the sole responsibility of the individual team and its members. Coaches must obtain proper authority, permits, insurance waivers and indemnification waivers for any practices held at any facilities not provided through SYSA. SYSA will hold no liability for injury or damages caused or incurred at non-designated facilities.
- c) No team will practice on public/county facilities when the fields are closed by SYSA or any public entity.
- d) Teams may participate in off-season activities such as indoor leagues, indoor training, futsal, performance training, etc. at the discretion of the head coach.
- e) Uniforms:
 - i) FC Orange and FC White may wear any combination of orange, black or white. Teams may choose any style, with the exception of the style and color of the FC Elite program. No other

color combinations are allowed. Teams are responsible to order and manage their uniform inventory. A sponsor's logo may be printed on one sleeve of the uniform jersey as long as it complies with SYSA Policy and travel league on sponsorships Policies.

- ii) FC Black and FC Silver teams will wear the same prescribed uniform. The colors will Black and White. A sponsor's logo may be printed on one sleeve of the uniform jersey as long as it complies with SYSA Policy and travel league on sponsorships Policies.
- iii) Sponsors logos regarding tobacco, alcohol or adult oriented themes may not be used. Sponsorship cannot have a connection with any political, religious, ethnic or racial affiliations.

f) Equipment:

- i) All travel teams must comply with the recommendations for equipment that are consistent with their respective league. Travel teams are largely responsible for supplying their own equipment, such as soccer balls, practice jerseys, field cones or markers. This equipment is considered the property of the travel team if such equipment is purchased by the team utilizing team funds.

g) Sponsors:

- i) SYSA travel teams may obtain sponsorship and financial support from individuals, businesses, corporations and organizations. Sponsorship cannot have a connection with any political, religious, ethnic or racial affiliations or make a connection that is inappropriate for a youth athletic team (*i.e.* tobacco, alcohol or x-rated video store sponsorship). All sponsorships will be directly managed by the individual teams.

14) FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- a) SYSA will collect per player dues prior to the season to cover league fees (WAGS, NCSL, VYSA, SYSA, etc.)
- b) FC Orange and FC White appointed head coaches will be responsible for finances and management of their appointed team. SYSA will not be responsible nor will it manage the financial liabilities of individual teams.
- c) FC Elite Black and Silver team's financial requirements will be managed through SYSA. SYSA and/or individual teams will collect player dues prior to the season to cover all team expenses, including, but not limited to, coaching fees and expenses, tournament fees and uniforms. SYSA will manage all sponsorships and donations for the FC Elite Black program.

15) MISCELLANEOUS

- a) Any action or issue of an operational or administrative nature not specifically contained or addressed within the context of this section that may arise or come into being after the effective date of this policy shall be subject to the discretion of the SYSA President or their designee unless such issue is of a non-operational nature and requires immediate policy action by the Board of Directors at their next regularly scheduled board meeting. For the purpose of this section, immediate policy action shall be construed to mean the overall policy or philosophy of SYSA and not the individual operational aspects of the travel program or an individual travel team.