



WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE

WWW.WAWSL.ORG ★ 703-827-7907

# Washington Area Women's Soccer League Constitution and Bylaws

*As Amended 20 March 2011*

Articles I–VI comprise WAWSL Constitution  
Articles VII–XIII comprise WAWSL Bylaws

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## **Article I. Name, Purpose, and Mission**

**Section 1.** The name of this organization shall be the WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN’S SOCCER LEAGUE (“WAWSL” or “League”).

**Section 2.** The Washington Area Women’s Soccer League is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has offered adult women’s soccer in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area since 1982. WAWSL is a state and nationally affiliated League that is governed, managed, officiated, and coached by League players and supporters.

**Section 3.** The Mission of WAWSL is to encourage life-long soccer involvement at all skill levels by supporting fair and competitive soccer, promoting women’s health and fitness, actively developing and nurturing new players, and fostering involvement in the broader DC soccer community.

## **Article II. Membership**

**Section 1.** Any women’s soccer team that has been accepted by the Board of Directors upon submission of an application for membership and payment of all appropriate fees, as determined by the Board of Directors, shall be a member of WAWSL.

**Section 2.** All players must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. By a vote of sixty-six percent (66%) of the Board of Directors, this rule may be waived.

**Section 3.** A player may compete for two (2) teams only if one (1) of those teams is recognized by the League as being in the Masters Division and the other team is recognized by the League as being in an open-age Division.

**Section 4.** Each player on a member team must be registered in accordance with WAWSL’s Bylaws and any other rules established by the Board of Directors.

## **Article III. Board of Directors**

**Section 1.** The Board of Directors (“Board”) shall consist of a Commissioner, Vice- Commissioner, Treasurer, Web Site Coordinator, Scheduler, Registrar, Field Coordinator, Referee Coordinator, New Player Coordinator(s), Social Coordinator, Recording Secretary, MDCVSA Representative, Director at large and one (1) representative from each Division (called “Division Directors”).

**Section 2.** The Board of Directors shall be elected in the following manner:

**a.** In order, the League Commissioner, Vice-Commissioner, Treasurer, Web Site

Coordinator, Scheduler, Registrar, Field Coordinator, Referee Coordinator, New Player Coordinator(s), Social Coordinator, Recording Secretary, MDCVSA Representative and Director at large shall be elected. Each of these Directors will be elected to serve a one-year term at the first General Meeting of the spring season.

- b. Then, teams within each Division shall elect one (1) representative. Each of these Division Directors will be elected to serve a one-season term.
- c. Newly-elected Directors assume their duties at the conclusion of the General Meeting.
- d. A candidate must receive a majority of votes in order to be elected. If two (2) candidates are tied with votes, the Commissioner or Vice-Commissioner shall break the tie.
- e. If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be removed from the ballot and another vote taken. If no candidate receives a majority, and multiple candidates are tied with the lowest number of votes, the Commissioner or Vice-Commissioner shall break the tie to remove one (1) of the candidates with the lowest number of votes.

**Section 3.** Vacancies on the Board of Directors shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board of Directors if such vacancies occur between General Meetings. The person appointed by the Board of Directors shall serve until the next General Meeting of the membership, at which time the members shall elect a Director to serve the unexpired term of the vacant seat.

**Section 4.** Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least once prior to each season. The Commissioner or Vice-Commissioner may call additional meetings at any time, and must do so upon request of a majority of the Directors. The time and place of each Board of Directors' meeting shall be given to each Director at least five (5) days prior to such meeting.

**Section 5.** No meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held without a quorum present. A majority of the Directors shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 6.** Each Director present at any Board of Directors' meeting shall be entitled to one (1) vote. The requisite number of votes to take any action shall be sixty-six percent (66%) of the votes cast, except where otherwise specified in WAWSL's Constitution or Bylaws.

**Section 7.** The Board of Directors shall have the authority to take such actions as may be necessary and appropriate to administer the following functions:

- a. Conducting meetings of the membership.
- b. Determining the size and number of Divisions within WAWSL, as well as the placement

of teams within WAWSL, in accordance with WAWSL's Bylaws.

- c. Scheduling WAWSL and tournament games.
- d. Disciplining member teams, players, and coaches for infractions of WAWSL's Constitution or Bylaws.
- e. Hearing complaints from referees, member teams, and WAWSL players concerning allegations of serious misconduct, and recommending appropriate action to WAWSL.
- f. Collecting, allocating, and disbursing funds as deemed necessary to conduct the duties assigned to the Board by WAWSL.

#### **Article IV. Team Representatives**

**Section 1.** Each team shall elect two (2) team representatives, who shall be registered players of that member team.

**Section 2.** The team representatives shall be responsible for attending the General Meetings, serving as contact persons through whom Board decisions and policies shall be reported, and performing such other duties as provided for under WAWSL's Bylaws or by the Board of Directors.

#### **Article V. General Meetings**

**Section 1.** General Meetings shall be held at least once prior to each season, the times and places of which shall be designated by the Board of Directors.

**Section 2.** A Special Meeting of team representatives may be called by the Commissioner or Vice-Commissioner of the Board of Directors, and must be called by either Commissioner or Vice-Commissioner within thirty (30) days of receipt of a written request from sixty-six percent (66%) of the team representatives of all WAWSL teams.

**Section 3.** At least twelve (12) days prior to any General or Special Meeting of the team representatives, a written notice of such meeting and an agenda shall be sent by the Board of Directors to each team representative at the address that they have registered in WAWSL's records.

**Section 4.** At any General or Special Meeting of team representatives, the attendance of fifty percent (50%) of the team representatives shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 5.** At any General or Special Meeting of team representatives, each WAWSL member team

shall be entitled to cast only one (1) vote on any matter presented to the team representatives for a vote. That vote shall be cast by only one (1) of the two (2) team representatives, or her designee.

**Section 6.** Any vote taken by the Board of Directors may be overridden by a veto of two-thirds (2/3) of the member teams of WAWSL.

**Section 7.** Meetings of team representatives shall be conducted generally in the following manner: (a) call to order; (b) committee reports; (c) unfinished business; (d) new business; (e) treasury reports; and (f) adjournment.

#### **Article VI. Adoption and Amendment of WAWSL's Constitution and Bylaws**

**Section 1.** The team representatives shall adopt a Constitution and Bylaws by an affirmative vote of sixty-six percent (66%) of the member teams, represented in person by a team representative or her designee at a duly held meeting of team representatives.

**Section 2.** Amendments to WAWSL's Constitution may be adopted by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the member teams, represented in person by a team representative or her designee at a duly held meeting of team representatives.

**Section 3.** Amendments to WAWSL's Bylaws may be adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of the member teams, represented in person by a team representative or her designee at a duly held meeting of team representatives.

#### **Article VII. Duties of the Board of Directors**

**Section 1.** The Board shall maintain records of previous meetings, standings, Board decisions, and any other related information necessary to administer the League.

**Section 2.** The Board shall provide to the team representatives the full rosters of team representatives and Board of Directors, as well as season and tournament schedules.

**Section 3.** The Board shall secure referees for League games.

**Section 4.** The Board may not remove a player, coach, spectator, or team for a season without an affirmative vote of sixty-six percent (66%) of the Board of Directors present at a duly held meeting.

**Section 5.** The Board may temporarily suspend a player, coach, spectator, or team for a portion of a season for the non-payment of fees or for misconduct. A team may appeal any suspension that is not an automatic suspension as defined in the Constitution or Bylaws.

## **Article VIII. Teams**

- Section 1.** The League will not register teams that cannot supply a roster containing at least eleven (11) registered players.
- Section 2.** Each team must pay registration, referee, insurance, and forfeiture fees, as determined by the Board of Directors and by the deadlines established by the Board.
- Section 3.** Teams must present a valid player pass for each of their players. By a vote of sixty-six percent (66%) of the Board of Directors, exceptions to this rule may be granted.
- Section 4.** In order to retain its previous season's final Division standing, a team must consist of at least six (6) of the players registered on the official WAWSL roster with that team in the previous season.
- Section 5.** In the case of any WAWSL member team split, the group that registers the majority of team players from the previous season's team shall retain the team's WAWSL Division standing. A team composed of the remaining players will be a new team and placed within the appropriate Division by the Board of Directors in accordance with the Bylaws.
- Section 6.** Each team must provide field equipment as required by the Board of Directors. This may include lining one-half of the field, providing one (1) net, one (1) acceptable game ball, and two (2) corner flags no later than fifteen (15) minutes after game time or field availability, whichever is later. The home team must provide one (1) acceptable game ball.
- Section 7.** Each team must provide at least one (1) currently certified Grade 8 referee who is validly registered on the team, called a "player-ref". Teams must provide player-ref(s) as officials for at least five (5) League matches each season. Failure to meet this requirement will result in fines to the team, as specified by the Board of Directors.
- Section 8.** Teams must have jerseys matching in color with contrasting numbers on the back. Each player must have an individual jersey number. Players with the same jersey number as another teammate may not play. Players without a number may not play. A team forfeits the game if it cannot field seven (7) or more players with different jersey numbers. Teams are allowed to wear sleeveless jerseys as long as these jerseys meet the other requirements stated herein regarding color and numbering. In the event two (2) competing teams have similar jersey colors, the home team must change to a non-conflicting color. The center referee determines what constitutes a similar jersey color. Numbered jerseys are not required in this situation. If the home team does not change jerseys, it forfeits the game.

**Section 9.** Teams are responsible for the conduct of their team players, coaches, and spectators. Team players, coaches, and spectators may not:

- a. use abusive or degrading language;
- b. verbally or physically threaten or assault anyone;
- c. possess, use, or be under the influence of alcohol or any other controlled substances;
- d. display unsporting behavior;
- e. harass the referee;
- f. enter the field of play, except for substitution or injury and with the prior permission of the referee;
- g. dispute or attempt to influence the referee's decisions.

Inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated and should be reported to the Board of Directors.

#### **Article IX. Players**

**Section 1.** Any woman participating in any WAWSL game does so at her own risk. The League, the Board of Directors, and the coaches do not accept responsibility for injuries to any player.

**Section 2.** New players must be registered and added to the appropriate team roster, with applicable fees paid in advance. Any team that uses a player without registering her before game time will forfeit those games in which that player participated.

**Section 3.** In order to participate in the League, all players must have a valid player pass that will be checked by the referee prior to the game. By a vote of sixty-six percent (66%) of the Board of Directors, exceptions to this rule may be granted.

#### **Article X. Divisions**

**Section 1.** Division standings are based on points awarded for results of regular season games. A win equals three (3) points, a tie equals one (1) point, a loss equals zero (0) points, and a forfeit equals negative one (-1) point.

**Section 2.** If teams in a Division play a different number of games during the same season, that weighted percentage [ (Wins + .333 \* Ties) / Games Played ] becomes the first factor in determining final Division standings when teams have an equal number of standings points.

**Section 3.** In the event of two (2) or more teams sharing the same number of points in the final standings, the following criteria, in order of priority, will be used to determine final Division



standings: goal differential (maximum differential of five (5) goals per game); goals scored; head-to-head standings points; least forfeitures; head-to-head goal differential (maximum differential of five (5) goals per game); goals scored head-to-head; most wins; most shutouts; and coin toss. A forfeit results in a zero to three (0-3) loss and negative one (-1) point in the standings.

**Section 4.** At the end of each season, the teams holding first and second place in each Division will move up to the bottom two positions of the next highest Division; the teams holding the second to last and last place in each Division will drop down to the first and second place position in the next lowest Division. By a vote of sixty-six percent (66%) of the Board of Directors, this rule may be waived. Section 5. Any new team that has been accepted for WAWSL membership by the Board of Directors will be placed in the appropriate Division by the Board of Directors in accordance with the following criteria:

- a. a team comprised of players with little to no experience may be placed in one (1) of the lower WAWSL Divisions;
- b. a team comprised of experienced players, but which is newly formed and does not have a season record from a recognized league, may be placed in one (1) of the middle Divisions;
- c. a team of experienced players with an appropriate season record (as determined by the Board of Directors) or tournament record may be placed in one (1) of the higher Divisions;
- d. no new team will be placed within any Division until the end of a season and following the movement of the season's first and last place teams in each Division to the appropriate positions within the next higher and lower Divisions;
- e. in placing new teams within WAWSL, the Board of Directors shall make no placement that would demote any team that just has been promoted to the next higher Division back down to the Division from which it was promoted, in accordance with these Bylaws.

## **Article XI. Rules of the Game**

**Section 1.** The Board of Directors will cancel games due to rain and/or poor field conditions according to the guidelines specified by the permit-issuing bodies. Team representatives and referees will be notified of cancellations at least one (1) hour before the start of the game.

**Section 2.** Within one (1) hour of the game time, the referee has the discretion to call off a game due to

heavy rain, lightning, or poor field conditions. The referee has the discretion either to

temporarily postpone the game in order to determine weather status, or to wait for clearing weather.

**Section 3.** Teams must make any scheduling requests before the schedules are set at the start of the season. Such requests will be handled at the discretion of the Board.

**Section 4.** If a team cannot field enough players for a game, and provides at least seventy-two (72) hours notice to the opposing team representative and a member of the Board of Directors, the game still is forfeited. However, only one-half (1/2) of the regular forfeit fee will be assessed.

**Section 5.** Any referee who is connected with one (1) of the teams in any capacity, and/or is related to any of the players, must disclose this information to the Referee Assignor and may be disqualified from officiating the match. In situations where the assigned referee does not show up, the two (2) teams may decide to use the referee services of any individual after mutual agreement. In these situations, the teams should clearly decide whether the game will be a scrimmage or a game that counts in the standings. If there is any disagreement between both teams on this decision, then the game will be considered a scrimmage.

**Section 6.** All of WAWSL's games are governed by the latest edition of the International Federation of Association Football's ("FIFA's") Laws of the Game, except where noted in WAWSL's Bylaws.

**Section 7.** As required by FIFA's Laws of the Game, every player must wear shin guards. In addition, no player may participate in a game while wearing an exposed cast or dangerous medical device. All casts, braces, and jewelry must be padded and covered.

**Section 8.** As allowed by FIFA's Laws of the Game, a fair slide tackle is permissible.

**Section 9.** In the case of a team not able to field seven (7) players at the time the game is scheduled to begin, a 15-minute grace period will be awarded. When the team is able to field seven (7) players, the game shall begin. If the team has fewer than seven (7) players at the end of the grace period, it forfeits that game. If a team starts a game with enough players, but because of injury or ejection, less than seven (7) players remain on the field, the team forfeits that game. There will be no forfeit fee assessed if the team falls below seven (7) players due to injury, but a forfeit fee may be assessed if the team falls below seven (7) players due to ejection or any other reason.

**Section 10.** Both teams may substitute any number of players: (a) after a goal is scored; (b) before a goal kick is taken; and/or (c) before the second period kick-off. The team in possession of the ball on a throw-in may substitute any number of players. A team, having received the referee's permission, may substitute for an injured player at any time.

**Section 11.** If a game is terminated by the referee due to inclement weather after the first half is completed, then that game shall count in the standings as a completed game. A game that is terminated before half-time for any reason other than forfeiture or team misconduct shall be rescheduled and re-played in its entirety.

**Section 12.** If requested by a team representative or League official, a team shall supply a roster of players participating in that game. This request must be made at any time before the start of the second half of play. If there is a player eligibility question, the game nonetheless should be played in its entirety and the center referee shall note such question in his or her game report. Subsequently, the Board of Directors, not the referee, will make the final determination that resolves that player eligibility question.

## **Article XII. Discipline and Forfeits**

**Section 1.** A player or coach who receives a red card is automatically suspended for the subsequently scheduled and actually played League game. After the Board receives the referee's report, an additional disciplinary action(s) may be imposed, depending upon the gravity of the misconduct. A player accumulating three (3) yellow cards in the same season is automatically suspended for the following scheduled and actually played League game. The offending player's team representative is required to report the red or yellow card to the Board of Directors within forty-eight (48) hours of the game.

**Section 2.** Any player who incurs a suspension in one season and subsequently incurs another suspension in the consecutive season will face an additional three (3) game suspension.

**Section 3.** If a player is ejected twice within one (1) season, their team will be penalized one (1) standings point. In addition, each time that the coach or that team's fan(s) gets ejected, their team will be penalized one (1) standings point.

**Section 4.** The referee has the authority to terminate a game at any time. Such a game is considered abandoned. The final outcome of abandoned games will be left to the discretion of the Board of Directors, who will declare a winner, a forfeit, or a replay.

**Section 5.** The following abandoned game situations generally will be forfeits, unless there are extreme

extenuating circumstances. The Board of Directors should declare a forfeit if a referee terminates a game because a team:

- a. has less than seven (7) players on the field fifteen (15) minutes after game time, or at any time thereafter;
- b. does not show up for a game that has not been formally canceled;
- c. does not provide the required field equipment;
- d. does not have primary matching jerseys with differing numbers; and/or
- e. does not change to jerseys of a non-conflicting color if they are the home team (numbers will not be required in this circumstance).

**Section 6.** The following abandoned game situations will be left to the discretion of the Board of Directors, who will declare a winner, a forfeit, or a replay, because a team:

- a. repeatedly or violently infringes FIFA's Laws of the Game;
- b. displays serious unsporting behavior by players, coaches, or spectators;
- c. leaves the field before the completion of the game; or
- d. causes, or fails to prevent, any other situation worthy of a forfeit.

**Section 7.** For the following situations, the referee should allow the continuation of the game, but the Board of Directors later may declare a forfeit. The Board probably will declare a forfeit if a team: (a) uses a player who is not validly registered through WAWSL; or (b) has not paid the registration, referee, insurance, and forfeiture fees, as determined by the Board of Directors and by the deadlines established by the Board.

**Section 8.** The following penalties will apply if a team forfeits a game:

- a. for the first and second forfeits, the team will pay a penalty as set by the Board of Directors, by a deadline set by the Board;
- b. after the third forfeited game, the Board of Directors may take disciplinary action as it deems appropriate. This may include, but is not limited to, loss of Division standing (which may involve movement to a lower Division); team suspension for the remainder of the season; and/or prohibiting the movement of individual players to other WAWSL teams until those players have paid their share of the team forfeit fee.

### **Article XIII. Protests**

**Section 1.** Protests to League match results must be filed by the team representative in writing to the Board of Directors, and sent or postmarked within seventy-two (72) hours of completion of

the game.

**Section 2.** All protests must be accompanied by a protest fee, as set by the Board of Directors. This fee is refundable if the appeal is upheld in whole or in part, but is non-refundable if the protest is denied.

**Section 3.** The opposing team, through its team representative, will be notified by the Board of Directors as to the nature of the protest. The team then will have seventy-two (72) hours to respond to the protest in writing.

**Section 4.** The Board then will meet and/or confer as soon as possible after this period to resolve the protest. A response to the protest will be sent in writing to both teams by the Board as soon as possible after the protest is submitted, but no later than one (1) week after the meeting.

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