

US Youth Soccer National League Charter

as of October 25, 2017

PART I. GENERAL ORGANIZATION

Section 101. National Competitions, National League, and Definitions

(a) US Youth Soccer shall conduct annually national competitions for its highest level of teams as provided in this charter, and this charter is adopted as a policy of US Youth Soccer. There is established the “US Youth Soccer National League” that shall conduct these competitions.

(b) The following definitions apply to this policy:

(1) “NL” means the US Youth Soccer National League as established under this policy.

(2) “NL Commissioner” means the National League Commissioner provided by section 106 of this policy.

(3) “NL Committee” and “Committee” mean the National League Committee provided by section 102 of this policy.

(4) “policy” means this charter.

(5) “primary regional league administrator” means the individual designated annually by the regional council of each region, by not later than August 1 of each year, who is directly involved in the administration of the region’s premier regional league for the next seasonal year.

Section 102. National League Committee

There is a National League Committee. The Committee has authority for the administration of the NL as provided by this policy.

Section 103. Appointment of NL Committee Members

The Chair of US Youth Soccer shall appoint the members of the NL Committee with the approval of the Board of Directors. The Chair shall appoint one of the NL Committee members as Chairperson of the NL Committee.

Section 104. Size of NL Committee

The NL Committee will consist of (1) a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 9 members who will represent the interest of the players, both boys and girls, (2) the NL Commissioner as an ex-officio, non-voting member as provided by section 106 of this policy, and (3) the chief executive officer of US Youth Soccer as required by section 1.B. 5 of article XVIII of the US Youth Soccer bylaws. A minimum of 2 and a maximum of 4 members of the 7-9 members shall come from the youth soccer coaching ranks.

Section 105. Limitations on NL Committee Members

No NL Committee member can be a sitting State Association President or a member of the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors.

Section 106. National League Commissioner

The CEO of US Youth Soccer shall appoint, either as a paid employee or as an independent contractor of US Youth Soccer, a National League Commissioner. The NL Commissioner shall be responsible for the administration of the NL in accordance with this policy and the direction of the NL Committee. The NL Commissioner shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the NL Committee

Section 107. NL Committee Member Term of Office

Each NL Committee member will serve at the pleasure of the Chair of US Youth Soccer for a two-year term of office. Since the initial terms of members were appointed on a staggered basis, each appointment remains a two-year term, except that if an appointment is made to fill an unexpired term, then that appointment is for the balance of the two-year term remaining. Committee members may serve more than one term.

PART II. AUTHORITY OF THE NL COMMITTEE

Section 201. General Authority

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

Section 202. League Rules and Procedures

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

Section 203. Rules, Procedures, and Policies

Except as otherwise provided by sections 307 and 308 of this policy, all proposed NL rules, procedures, and policies, and amendments to them, must be in writing and must note an effective date at least 10 business days after the date it has been approved by the NL Committee. A copy of each NL rule, procedure, policy, and amendment approved by the Committee, including those adopted under sections 307 and 308, shall be distributed to each member of the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors immediately after its approval by the Committee and shall be made generally available in writing..

Section 204. Support Groups and Personnel

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

Section 205. Paid Staff Positions

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

Section 206. Budget

The NL Committee, in consultation with the US Youth Soccer Chief Executive Officer, will submit a proposed annual budget in accordance with US Youth Soccer Financial Policy.

Section 207. Disputes, Discipline and Appeals

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

PART III. OPERATION OF THE NL COMMITTEE

Section 301. NL Committee Chairperson

(a) The Chairperson of the NL Committee will preside at NL Committee meetings, sign all contracts on behalf of the NL Committee, represent the NL Committee, and supervise the work of the NL Commissioner. However, all contracts may be signed only with the approval of the Chair of US Youth Soccer, except that sponsorship contracts require the approval of the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors.

(b) In the event of a vacancy in the NL Commissioner position, the NL Chairperson will assume general executive authority over the work of the NL Committee and the NL and will supervise the work of all NL volunteers and staff.

Section 302. NL Commissioner General Responsibilities

The NL Commissioner shall be the chief executive officer of the NL. He or she will be responsible for making sure that all responsibilities assigned to the NL Committee by this policy are performed. The NL Commissioner will faithfully perform all duties detailed in his/her job description and all tasks assigned by the NL Committee.

Section 303. Chain of Command

All NL volunteers, committees, staff, and others accountable to the NL Committee will report to the NL Commissioner. The NL Commissioner will report to the Chairperson of the NL Committee.

Section 304. Job Description and Compensation

The NL Committee shall establish a detailed job description and compensation package for the Commissioner's position, in accordance with the budget.

Section 305. Voting by NL Committee Members at NL Committee Meetings

Each member of the NL Committee will have one vote on the NL Committee.

Section 306. Formal Meetings

Except as provided by sections 307 and 308 of this policy, the NL Committee may meet in formal session in person or by conference call on five days' notice. An agenda must be provided to NL Committee members at least 3 days before the meeting.

Section 307. Emergency Meetings

The NL Committee may hold an emergency meeting with minimal notice as determined by the NL Committee Chairperson or NL Commissioner, or both. Only matters needing immediate attention may be acted upon during an emergency meeting.

Section 308. Emergency Decisions

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

PART IV. NL STRUCTURE AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS FINALS TEAMS

Section 401. NL Structure

The following provisions apply in regard to the teams and competitions of the NL:

- (1) The NL will have competition in the 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 18U girls and boys gender age groups.
 - (A) the 14U and 15U gender age groups shall each have a maximum of 16 teams accepted by the NL Committee with at least 2 teams from each region in each gender age group based on the recommendations of the primary regional league administrator for each of the regions, and
 - (B) the 16U, 17U and 18U gender age groups shall each have a maximum of 32 teams accepted by the NL Committee with at least 5 teams from each region in each gender age group based on the recommendations of the primary regional league administrator for each of the regions. Increasing the number of teams in a gender age group above the number authorized in this paragraph (2) is subject to approval of the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors.
- (2) A minimum of the top 8 teams in each 14U, 15U, 16U and 17U gender age group from the prior seasonal year will automatically retain their team slots in the appropriate gender age group for the next seasonal year, and the balance of the teams in that gender age group will be determined by the NL Committee.

Consistent with these requirements, the NL Committee will have authority to structure the NL, to divide it into various divisions, to assign teams to those divisions, to provide for the qualification of teams from regional leagues into the NL and relegation of teams out of the NL, to designate the NL seasons and team schedules, and to establish and enforce team participation eligibility rules.

- (3) The NL may not schedule games that conflict with inter-regional ODP Thanksgiving or Christmas events for gender age groups participating in those events.

Section 402. State, Regional, and National Championships Participation

The following provisions apply to NL teams competing in the US Youth Soccer National Championships finals:

- (1) In order to be eligible to advance to the US Youth Soccer National Championship finals, teams in the 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 18U gender age groups participating in the NL must also participate in their respective State Cup competitions in the current seasonal year and the top regional league of each region should the team qualify. NL teams that qualify to represent the NL at the US Youth Soccer National Championship finals are not required to participate in the Regionals competition of the National Championship Series if the team qualifies for the Regionals as a State Association representative or a Regional League representative.
- (2) For the National Championships finals, the top four teams in each of the 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 18U gender age groups represent the National League in the National Championships finals. If any of those teams is also a regional Cup championship team, that team will represent the National League in the finals and not represent its region in the finals. If any National League team qualifying for the finals in a gender age group is determined to be ineligible to compete in the finals, the next eligible National League team in that gender age group will represent the National League in the finals in place of the ineligible team.

Section 403. Amendment of Policy

- (1) This policy may be amended at any time by a majority vote of the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors or National Council.
- (2) Amendments to this policy are effective the day after approval by a majority vote of the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors or National Council.