

RULES OF THE EAST LANSING SOCCER CLUB

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PREAMBLE

The East Lansing Soccer Club is a not-for-profit, volunteer-based organization whose express goal is to teach the youth of East Lansing the sport of soccer and to provide those youth with opportunities to play the game. The Club is managed by an annually-elected Board of Directors who are given broad discretion to carry out the administration and business of the Club. The rules described here are intended to give the Board, Club members, coaches, players, parents and all involved a framework within which to work so that everyone may better understand the rights and obligations that come with joining the East Lansing Soccer Club.

Parents and spectators are to remember that the East Lansing Soccer Club is an educational youth soccer organization, and that, as such, every participant - from the youngest player to oldest coach - is in the process of learning to understand and appreciate the sport of soccer. All parents and spectators shall conduct themselves in accordance with this guiding principle.

A. GENERAL RULES

A.1. Sportsmanship. All players, coaches, parents, fans and referees will show good sportsmanship. Each team shall be responsible for the conduct of its coaches, managers, players, parents and fans. It is the responsibility of each team to insure that its actions on and off the field do not bring disrespect to the club.

A.2. Registration and Payment of Fees. All players shall fully complete all paper and electronic registration forms required by the Club and applicable league in a timely manner. All fees due shall be paid in a timely manner.

A.3. Proof of Age. Any player can be called up on to prove his or her legal age to the Club Registrar. A domestic or foreign birth certificate, passport, adoption certificate, or certificate of naturalization shall be sufficient for proof of age.

A.4. Compliance with Club and league rules. By registering to play with the Club, the registering player and his or her family agree to abide by the rules of this Club and any league(s) in which the player, through the Club, participates. By accepting a coaching appointment with the Club, a coach or staff member agrees to abide the rules of this Club and any league(s) in which the coach or staff member, through the Club, participates.

A.5. Player Commitment. By registering with the Club in the Instructional League, Recreational League, or Select League, a player is committing to play with his or her assigned team for the entire fall and subsequent spring season. New teams shall be formed in June of each

year for the subsequent fall / spring season.

A.6. Family Commitment. By registering one or more soccer players with the Club, the parents or guardians of that player agree to abide by the rules of this Club and any league(s) in which their player(s), through the Club, participates. The parents or guardians also agree to the following:

- a. That registration represents a one-year, fall and spring commitment to one team.
- b. That there shall be no switching teams between the fall and spring of any given year, but that the Club may allow adding players mid-year in accordance with league rules
- c. That parents and guardians are responsible for timely completion of Club and league forms and paperwork.
- d. That they must acquire the standard uniform and basic equipment for their player(s).
- e. That attendance by the player(s) at training sessions and games is not optional at any level.
- f. That the coach is the decision-maker in training sessions and practices.
- g. That the referee is the decision-maker in games.
- h. That accepting a roster spot on a Select team means an enhanced commitment from all involved, from players to families to coaches.
- i. That tryouts for the Select teams will be at roughly the same time every year, requiring families to plan accordingly. Tryouts are conducted according to league and state-level rules, and may not allow for special or supplementary tryouts.
- j. That while they have the right to the appeals and formal complaint processes described in these rules, parents and guardians will first make an effort at open communication with a child's coach before using those processes.

B. TEAM FORMATION

B.1. Selecting Coaches. All coaches and coaching staff members who interact with players during games or practices must possess Risk Management clearance, or its equivalent, as established by the MSYSA. Coaches shall be selected according to the following criteria:

- a. Kindergarten Program: shall be selected by the Kindergarten program coordinator at his or her discretion.
- b. Instructional League: shall be selected from interested parents or guardians of enrolled players.
- c. Recreational League: shall be selected from interested parents or guardians of enrolled players, or qualified volunteers. Where more than one parent expresses an interest in coaching a team, the Recreational Program coordinator, with the help of the Board of Directors as requested by the Coordinator, will select a coach based on upon, collectively,
 - i. prior experience coaching the same players
 - ii. prior coaching experience generally
 - iii. playing experience
 - iv. any other relevant criteria
- d. Select League: shall be selected from qualified volunteers who possess at a minimum an E-Level USSF Coaching License, or who are willing to acquire such a license within 12 months of appointment. Persons interested in being considered for an appointment to coach a select Club team shall apply to the Board of Directors in a

written letter setting forth the applicant's qualifications for the position. Where more than one person expresses an interest in coaching a team, the President of the Club, with the help of the Board of Directors as requested by the President, will select a coach based upon, collectively,:

- i. level of formal training obtained by the applicant
- ii. prior coaching experience with the same players
- iii. prior coaching experience generally
- iv. playing experience
- v. coaching philosophy
- vi. any other relevant criteria

B.2. Coach Appointment. The decision to appoint or not appoint a coach to a coaching position is final and not subject to appeal or review by the applicant(s). Two or more individuals shall not be appointed as co-coaches unless the applicants each request that they be allowed to co-coach together. Each coach may appoint his or her own assistant coach, team manager, and/or additional staff, if desired, subject to the requirement that all staff members must possess Risk Management clearance as set forth in Rule B.1, and any League limitations on the number of staff members allowed. Whenever possible, Select League coaches shall be appointed in advance of spring tryouts. By accepting a coaching appointment, each coaching staff accepts the responsibility to:

- a. Ensure that all league and club-required paperwork is completed in a timely manner.
- b. Attend all mandatory league and club meetings.
- c. Communicate regularly with players and players' families regarding scheduling.
- d. Schedule and attend 2 practices per week at club-designated fields.
- e. Attend all league-scheduled games.
- f. Abide by these rules, league rules, and common sense.

B.3 Coach and Staff Reimbursement. The Club shall reimburse all coaches, assistant coaches and managers for funds expended by those persons in obtaining risk-management clearance and in receiving formal USSF licensure resulting in the issuance of a license. Reimbursement shall be conducted using Board-approved reimbursement forms and demonstration that clearance and/or licensure was achieved.

B.4. Registration. With the exception of the Kindergarten program, all players shall register with the Club in May or June of any given year, at which time they shall register to participate in Club programs for the follow fall/spring season. Participation in the Select League is only available to those players that participate in the annually-scheduled tryouts, which shall be conducted in accordance with league rules. Players who choose not to participate in the Select League, or who try out for a Select team but are not offered a roster spot, shall be presumed to be participating in the Recreational League and shall be assigned to a recreational team roster. Players for whom registration fees have not been paid in a timely manner shall not be allowed to participate in Club activities, and may be removed from assigned rosters. Families requesting a refund of fees before August 1 shall be granted a full refund. Families requesting a refund between August 1 and the first game of the season shall be granted at 50% refund. Families requesting a refund after the start of the season shall only be granted a refund at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

B.5. Select League Tryouts. Tryout for roster spots on the Select-league teams shall be

conducted annually in accordance with league rules. Players seeking to play on a Club Select-league team must participate in a tryout. The format of the tryout and the finalization of the roster shall be at the discretion of the appointed coach, subject to league rules.

B.6. Age Restrictions. The Club shall abide by state and league rules regarding age eligibility for participation on any given team. The Club shall make a reasonable effort to identify which age-appropriate team(s) any given player is eligible to join, but the ultimate responsibility for determining age-based eligibility falls to the parents or guardians of the registering child.

B.7. Recreational Rosters. Recreational-league rosters will be assembled by the Registrar or Recreational-league Coordinator from the list of players who have paid the registration fees and who have registered for recreational soccer or who were not offered a roster spot on a Select team. The Club will attempt to form teams organized both by the school the players attend and by grade. Where there are insufficient players to form a team at a particular age and/or school, the Club may combine two age groups that are one year apart to play at the older age group. Recreational coaches are responsible, in addition to the general coach responsibilities set forth in these Rules, for attending the pre-season meeting, setting a practice schedule and reserving practice fields, and contacting their players. It then falls to the coach to teach the basics of the game and an age-appropriate level, and manage the games themselves according to East Side or other league rules and modified FIFA laws. Recreational coaches are issued a basic set of equipment at the beginning of the year and are expected to return it at the end of the year, for which the Equipment Coordinator may require a refundable cash deposit.

B.8. Select Rosters. Select-league rosters shall be formed in strict accordance with league rules, including but not limited to rules governing geographical and age-based eligibility.

- a. Each fall the club will attempt to organize U10 through U14 teams for the boys and U10 through U19 teams for the girls; this is reversed in the spring. The older players' 1/2 seasons are based on the high-school sports schedule. The Club shall not organize any U9 teams unless they are specifically requested by the parents.
- b. In accordance with league rules, all Select-league players must try out and compete for available roster spots. The tryout schedule shall set by the President or Select-League Coordinator in the spring, before the spring mailer to all current players' families goes out. Coaches shall have have two formal nights of tryouts, but any alternative tryout dates are entirely at the discretion of the coach.
- c. Age-eligibility requirements shall be included directly on the tryout schedule. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians of a prospective player to determine age eligibility for that player.
- d. The Club shall not allow a recreational coach to 'bring over' an entire recreational team into the Select-league program. All players must try out, and the available roster spots are to be awarded to those players who demonstrate the highest degree of aptitude, interest, athletic ability and commitment to the game, regardless of school affiliation, prior team affiliation, or prior coach affiliation.
- e. Where there are enough players trying out to field more than one team within an age group, the coaches are cautioned to ensure that they truly have enough qualified players to field multiple teams. If there are sufficient qualified players, the division of the players between the two teams is left up to those coaches. Where the coaches cannot agree upon the division of players, the President or Select-league Coordinator shall make a final

determination.

f. Below U11 the coaches are encouraged to keep the teams evenly balanced in terms of talent and ability. From U11 up the coaches are encouraged to form upper and lower teams.

g. Players are allowed to try out for their own age group and / or the age group one year older. A coach forming a select roster may offer a roster spot to such a player, and decline offering to a less-qualified player of the typical age for that group. No more than three roster spots may be offered to players playing "up" without the express permission of the Board of Directors. Playing "up" more than one year requires special permission from the league, and so is discouraged but not disallowed by the club.

h. The decision as to the format of the tryout and who to offer roster spots to is left to the discretion of the coach(es). The Club requires a fair, objective and publicized tryout, but does not define the term "tryout." It is left to the discretion of our coaches as to the adjudication format.

i. Once the roster is selected, the appointed coaches must contact every player who tried out to tell them whether they made the team or not, in a timely manner.

j. Coaches are required to themselves, or with the help of a team manager, complete certain team-formation forms with the league and to communicate to the parents regarding their responsibilities regarding paperwork. If registrations are not completed on time, the coach bears the burden of fixing the problem. The President or Select-league Coordinator shall communicate to the coaches throughout the summer regarding deadlines, and shall monitor registration progress.

k. At the start of each fall and each spring season, each recreational and Select coach shall be issued a check for his or her referee fees for that fall or spring season. It falls to the coach to parcel out and pay that money in accordance with league rules that he or she learns at the coaches' meetings. Any such funds remaining unused at the end of the season are to be returned to the Club.

C. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

C.1. Player behavior. All persons who play with or for the Club, regardless of age or program, shall demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times and adherence to the FIFA laws and league and club rules. Players shall be subject to discipline for violation of said rules, and the Board of Directors reserves the right to subject players to additional discipline, beyond that issued by a league or other governing body, as the facts warrant. Disciplinary matters shall be addressed as set forth in these rules. By registering with the Club, each player commits to:

- a. Play according to the laws and spirit of the game.
- b. Be on time and prepared for games and practice sessions.
- c. Display self-control in all situations: before, during and after games and training sessions.
- d. Train and play to the best of his or her ability.
- e. Respect referees and opponents, and not dispute referee decisions.
- f. Maintain and appropriate uniform and training gear.
- g. Obey Club and League rules.

C.2. Coach and volunteer behavior All persons who coach, serve as staff members, and or

volunteer with or for the Club, regardless of age or program, shall demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times and adherence to the FIFA laws and league and club rules. All such persons shall be subject to discipline for violation the laws and rules, and the Board of Directors reserves the right to subject such persons to additional discipline, beyond that issued by a league or other governing body, as the facts warrant. Disciplinary matters shall be addressed as set forth in these rules. By registering with the Club, each coach or volunteer commits to:

- a. Be responsible for the behavior of his or her team and that team's supporters.
- b. Make appropriate decisions regarding the health, safety and welfare of his or her team members. This necessarily includes the decision to abandon a game or the field of play if the coach perceives that he or she, a parent, or the team is in danger.
- c. Educate him or herself as to the laws of the game and conduct play according to the laws and spirit of the game.
- d. Be on time and prepared for games and practice sessions.
- e. Display exemplary self-control in all situations: before, during and after games and training sessions. Coaching from the side lines shall be conducted in a constrained and reasonable manner, in areas designated by league rules or FIFA laws. Coaches shall never make threatening gestures or use threatening language towards players, coaches, referees, spectators or league or club officials.
- f. Respect referees, respect opponents, and dispute referee decisions only through proper channels. A coach or other volunteers shall not:
 - i. argue or question any call made by a referee with that referee during or after the game.
 - ii. approach a referee for any reason without express permission from that referee.
- g. Communicate with the families of team members regarding scheduling and team management.
- h. Obtain risk-management clearance and licensure as required by these rules.
- i. Complete league-required paperwork in accordance with league rules.
- j. Not leave children unattended at a training session or game, nor allow a child to leave unless accompanied by a parent, guardian or designated adult.
- k. Attend all regularly-scheduled pre-season Club and league coach meetings.

C.3. Parent and spectator behavior. By registering a child with the Club, and/or attending Club training sessions or games, each parent or spectator agrees to:

- a. Demonstrate exemplary good behavior, regardless of the outcome of a game.
- b. Exhibit a positive attitude toward all players, coaches, officials and other spectators.
- c. Refrain from attempting to coach the players on the field or otherwise subvert the efforts of the appointed coach.
- d. Never yell at the referee or coach.
- e. Respect the opponents and opponents spectators.
- f. Remain even tempered and never use foul language in the vicinity of a playing field or training area. Violence and/or threatened violence shall not be allowed nor tolerated.
- g. Leave without protest when instructed to do so by your team's coach, coaching staff, referee(s) or club or league officials.
- h. Never approach a referee after a game for any reason.
- i. Help your player to be at practices and games, on time and ready to play.
- j. Ensure that your player has the proper clothing and equipment every time he or she enters the soccer field.

k. Abide by all club and league rules and FIFA laws applicable to spectators. Parents, guardians and/or spectators may be subject to discipline for violation of Club and league rules, and the Board of Directors reserves the right to subject such persons to additional discipline, beyond that issued by a league or other governing body, as the facts warrant. Parents or spectators may be barred from being physically present at Club events, including training sessions, games, tournaments, and/or meetings.

D. DISCIPLINE

D.1. Scope of Rules. These disciplinary rules are intended to supplement the disciplinary rules to which players and personnel may otherwise be subject by nature of the participation in a league or tournament, and to be controlling in situations where no such external rules apply. The Club reserves the right to enforce discipline in addition to that which may or may not be imposed by a separate governing body, and is not bound by the factual findings nor conclusions reached by such a governing body when considering the enforcement of club-level discipline. Any player, coach, staff-member, volunteer or parent/guardian associated with the Club may be subject to discipline for violation of these rules, applicable league rules, or FIFA laws.

D.2. Team Rules. Teams may deem fit to enact rules and regulations regarding player, parent/guardian and staff-member conduct that are in accordance with the rules set forth herein. Said rules must be reasonable and age-appropriate, and may be more stringent than those included herein, but in no case may they be less stringent.

D.3. Discipline Procedure. Any misconduct by a player, coach or staff member, or spectator, justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to a member of the Board of Directors of the Club. Once a Board member receives a disciplinary complaint it shall be passed on to the President, who shall make an initial determination as to the validity of the complaint and may contact the complainant for clarification. A written report is encouraged but not required if not otherwise required by league rules. Discipline shall be levied in accordance with these Rules.

a. Player Discipline. For matters involving alleged assault (an unwelcome act that involves physical contact with a person, person's uniform, or person's personal property, either directly or through an instrumentality) committed by players, or alleged serious or chronic violation of Club or league rules, the complainant and accused shall be notified that at a complaint was received. If the complaint is preliminarily deemed to be invalid, this shall be communicated to the complainant and no further action shall be taken. If the complaint is deemed to be valid, a hearing shall be scheduled within 7 days of that determination before a panel of three members of the Board of Directors, including, at a minimum, the President or Vice-President. The purpose of the hearing shall be to offer a fair and impartial forum at which the Club may bring closure to the complaint. The three-board-member committee may, in advance of the hearing, interview such persons as may have direct knowledge of matters at issue. The date of the hearing, nature of the allegation, and preliminary factual findings shall be communicated, in writing, to the accused within a reasonable time in advance of the hearing date. The accused shall have the following rights:

i. Notice of the specific charges or alleged violations in writing, and of the

- possible consequences if the charges are found to be true.
- ii. The right to have the hearing conducted at a time and place so as to make it practicable for the accused to attend.
 - iii. A hearing before a fair and impartial panel of fact finders.
 - iv. The right to call witnesses and present oral and written evidence and argument.
 - v. A written decision, with the reasons for the decision, based upon the evidence presented at the hearing, issued in a timely fashion and setting forth any appeal rights and procedures.

The President, or Vice-President if the President is not available to conduct the hearing, shall have the authority to conduct the hearing in an orderly manner.

b. Coach / Staff Discipline. For matters involving alleged assault (an intentional act of physical violence) committed by a coach or team staff person, or alleged serious or chronic violation of Club or league rules, the complainant and accused shall be notified that a complaint was received. If the complaint is preliminarily deemed to be invalid, this shall be communicated to the complainant and no further action shall be taken. If the complaint is deemed to be valid, a hearing shall be scheduled within 7 days of that determination before a panel of three members of the Board of Directors, including, at a minimum, the President or Vice-President. The purpose of the hearing shall be to offer a fair and impartial forum at which the Club may bring closure to the complaint. The three-board-member committee may, in advance of the hearing, interview such persons as may have direct knowledge of matters at issue. The date of the hearing, nature of the allegation, and preliminary factual findings shall be communicated, in writing, to the accused within a reasonable time in advance of the hearing date. The accused shall have the following rights:

- i. Notice of the specific charges or alleged violations in writing, and of the possible consequences if the charges are found to be true.
- ii. The right to have the hearing conducted at a time and place so as to make it practicable for the accused to attend.
- iii. A hearing before a fair and impartial panel of fact finders.
- iv. The right to call witnesses and present oral and written evidence and argument.
- v. A written decision, with the reasons for the decision, based upon the evidence presented at the hearing, issued in a timely fashion and setting forth any appeal rights and procedures.

The President, or Vice-President if the President is not available to conduct the hearing, shall have the authority to conduct the hearing in an orderly manner.

c. Emergency Discipline Allegations of assault, which for purposes of this rule is defined as an unwelcome act that involves physical contact with a person, persons' uniform, or person's personal property, either directly or through an instrumentality, and/or allegations of a threatened assault, may, upon the concurrence of the President of the Club and two members of the Board of Directors, result in the immediate suspension or ban of the accused, pending a hearing.

D.4. Appeals Procedure. Any request for an appeal does not stay a punishment issued by the Club. Where a player, coach, staff member or parent/spectator has been subjected to Club-level discipline issued by the Board of Directors in accordance with these rules amounting to a two-game suspension or greater, that person may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors of the Club. An appeal must be filed in writing, with the President of the Club, within 10 days from the

issuance of the discipline. The written request of the appellant shall form the basis of the appeal, which shall be conducted by the entire Board of Directors without a hearing, and based upon the written findings of the three-member disciplinary committee and the written appeal. A written determination of upholding, lifting, or modifying the discipline shall be issued within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal. Decisions made by a referee within the context of that referee's assignment are not subject to appeal.

D.5. Fees and Fines. The Club shall not levy disciplinary fees or fines in addition to those levied by applicable leagues or governing bodies, but where a disciplinary fee or fine is levied against the Club by nature of a person's misconduct, the Club may demand reimbursement of said expense from such person, and suspend that person from Club activity until reimbursed.

D.6. Suspensions / Bans. Where a person has been suspended or banned from a match or game, that person may not be physically present at that game within viewing distance of the playing surface. The failure to abide by a suspension or ban shall be deemed a serious violation of disciplinary rules, and subject the violator to additional discipline.

D.7. Pleas of Ignorance. A plea of ignorance of Club rules, league rules, FIFA laws or other officially promulgated and applicable guidelines is not sufficient and shall not excuse errant behavior.

D.8. Minimum Punishments In general, players shall be subject to the rules of the leagues in which their teams play. The Club reserves the right, via the three-Board-member panel system described above, to impose the following minimum punishments in addition to such as may be imposed by an applicable league, where there are no league rules governing the disciplinary violation, or where the league has determined that no sanction is warranted but the Club, pursuant to disciplinary procedures, determines that a sanction is warranted:

- a. Player Fighting: players guilty of fighting before, during or after training sessions or games shall receive a two-game suspension.
- b. Player Profanity: players guilty of using profanity, either by word or sign, against another player, coach, spectator, referee or any club or league official shall receive a two-game suspension.
- c. Player Threats: a player guilty of making a threatening gesture against another player, coach, spectator, referee, or club or league official shall receive a one-game suspension.
- d. Player Striking Official: a player guilty of striking or pushing any coach, referee, or any club or league official shall receive a one-year suspension.
- e. Coach Threats: coaches or team staff who make threatening gestures, use threatening language, or otherwise attempt to intimidate players, coaches, club or league officials shall be subject to the following:
 - i. First Incident: two-game suspension.
 - ii. Second Incident: four-game suspension.
 - iii. Third Incident: minimum one-year suspension.
- f. Coach Fighting / Violence: coaches or team staff who fight or engage in physical violence at any time shall be subject to the following:
 - i. First Incident: one-year suspension.
 - ii. Second Incident: life-time suspension.
- e. Spectator / Parent Threats: parents or spectators who make threatening gestures, use

threatening language, or otherwise attempt to intimidate players, coaches, club or league officials shall be subject to the following:

- i. First Incident: two-game ban.
- ii. Second Incident: four-game ban.
- iii. Third Incident: minimum one-year ban.

f. Spectator or Parents Fighting / Violence: spectators or parents who fight or engage in physical violence at any time shall be subject to the following:

- i. First Incident: one-year ban.
- ii. Second Incident: life-time ban.

g. Failure to Leave Field of Play: any adult who fails to leave the area of the field of play without protest, when ordered to do so by an appropriate official in accordance with Club or league rules, shall be subject to the following:

- i. First Incident: two-game suspension / ban.
- ii. Second Incident: four-game suspension / ban.
- iii. Third Incident: minimum one-year suspension / ban.

D.9. Misconduct Toward a Referee. The Club has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy toward misconduct toward referees. Any player, coach, staff member or official committing any misconduct as defined by USSF Policy 531-9 shall be dealt with in accordance with that policy. "Referee abuse" is defined as a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment. "Referee assault" is defined as an act that involves physical contact with a referee, referee's uniform, or referee's personal property, either directly or through an instrumentality. Where a referee is not subject USSF jurisdiction, the following shall apply:

- a. Upon receipt of an allegation that a person as committed referee assault, the President of the club shall automatically suspend that person, pending a hearing on the matter.
- b. The Board of Directors shall appoint a three-person panel to schedule a hearing within 7 days of verification by the President of the allegation of abuse or assault. Failure to timely hold an initial hearing shall not rescind the automatic suspension.
 - i. Both the accused and referee shall be given written notice of the hearing and an opportunity to appear.
 - ii. The failure of any party to appear at the hearing shall not be deemed evidence of guilt or innocence of the accused person.
 - iii. Matter shall otherwise be addressed according to the procedure set forth in **Rule D.3.b.** above.
- c. If, after said hearing, the accused is found guilty of abuse, the following shall apply: the accused shall serve a minimum suspension of three games, and shall issue a formal, written apology to the referee.
- d. If, after said hearing, the person is found guilty of assault, the following shall apply:
 - i. For a minor or slight touching of the referee or referee's uniform or property, either directly or through an instrumentality, a minimum 1/2 season suspension (fall or spring).
 - ii. For any other assault, a minimum 1 year suspension from the time of the assault.
 - iii. For any assault committed by an adult where the referee is 17 years of age or younger, a minimum three-year suspension.
 - iv. For any assault where serious injuries are inflicted, a life-time ban.

The Club strongly cautions all parents and spectators that there is never a situation, within the context of the rules, that attempting to engage a referee in discourse related to a game is appropriate, and that doing so under any circumstance risks a violation of this rule. The Club strongly cautions all coaches and team staff members that an "implied threat" will be interpreted from the point of view of the referee, and that attempting to engage a referee in discourse related to a game is therefore a risky and ill-advised act under any circumstance. Problems or issues with the manner in which a referee has performed his or her duties should be reported to Club officials who will address the matter through proper channels.

D.10. Litigation. No player, coach, staff member, volunteer, family-member of the same, nor guardian of the same may invoke the aid of the courts in the United States or the State of Michigan, against the Club nor its Board of Directors, without first exhausting all available remedies within the Club rules, applicable league rules, and as provided within the rules and bylaws of the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association, US Youth Soccer and the United States Soccer Federation. Failure to abide by this rule shall require the offending party to be liable to the Club for all expenses incurred by the Club in defending each such court action, without limitation.

E. CLUB FINANCES

E.1. Books and Records. The Club shall keep financial records in accordance with its Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, governing statutes, and generally-accepted standards and practices. Financial records shall be made available to members of the Board of Directors upon request.

E.2. Accountant. The Club may retain a certified public accountant to annually prepare its tax returns and any other tax, income or financial reporting required by state or federal law. Tax filings generated by the Club shall be made available to members of the Board of Directors upon request and as otherwise required by law.

E.3. Scholarship program. The Club shall subsidize the basic, general registration fee for players whose family is income-qualified to for free or reduced student lunches under the State of Michigan program for the same, upon request from such players and proof of eligibility. The scholarship shall be in the form of \$50 reduction from the basic recreational-league fee. Where such a player instead plays on a Select-league team, that reduction in the initial registration fee shall still apply, but the balance of the full Select-league registration fee shall otherwise be due. Such families shall be encouraged to seek additional scholarship moneys directly from the applicable Select league. In no event shall the Club provide additional subsidies for equipment, uniforms, nor tournament fees. Applications for, and documentation of, scholarships and scholarship-eligibility shall be kept in confidence.

E.4. Billing. The Club shall establish a billing system to be administered by the Treasurer with the assistance of the Registrar and program coordinators. The annual fee due to the Club for the various programs shall be reviewed and set by the Board of Directors prior to the spring registration period. An initial registration fee to be paid by all registering players, regardless of program, shall be collected with the with spring registration. For those players participating in the Select-league program, an additional fee to pay for the additional costs associated with such program shall be subsequently collected. Players for whom timely payment is not made shall not

be allowed to participate in Club programs.

F. CLUB REFEREES

F.1. Referee Jurisdiction. Referees associated with the Club shall be governed by league rules and regulations. Where league rules do not address referees, or defer the provision and governance of referees to the Club, this provision shall apply.

F.2. Referee Recruitment. The Club shall endeavor to recruit and train youth referees, and to provide such referees with a positive and encouraging atmosphere in which to learn and improve referee skills.

F.3. Referee Training. Where a league has deferred to the Club to provide and oversee referees, the Club shall annually offer referee training in accordance with the FIFA laws of the game and league-based modifications of those laws.

F.4. Referee Assigning. Where a league has deferred to the Club to schedule and assign its own referees, the Club shall appoint one or more Assignors who shall articulate and administer an objective, fair and reasonable system for assigning club referees.

F.5. Referee Misconduct. Any alleged misconduct by a referee shall be reported to the President of the Club. The interpretation and application of the Laws of the Game is the exclusive providence of the referee and shall not be reviewed, nor shall matters of interpretation nor application ever be deemed misconduct. Allegations of abuse or assault of players, staff or spectators are the only matters for which a referee may be investigated and/or disciplined for misconduct. In such event, a club referee may be disciplined as per **Rule D.3.b** above. Misconduct against a referee is strictly forbidden and is addressed in **Rule D.9.** above.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the East Lansing Soccer Club on September 19, 2011.

/s/ Geoffrey Ehnis-Clark

President, East Lansing Soccer Club