



Discipline & Appeals Manual for Affiliated Leagues and Players



This manual is meant to serve several purposes. First it is intended to provide guidelines and procedures for Member Leagues (Leagues) affiliated with the Oregon Adult Soccer Association (OASA), and to help them understand that while they have wide latitude in issuing penalties to help make sure that all players conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the standards of the league, the players, teams, coaches and other accused individuals must be granted due process (in a word: fairness).

Second, this manual is an attempt to help the accused (generally players) understand their rights within the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) system, which is the system that all affiliated entities, including the OASA, must follow. The handbook also describes the options for appealing a League Judicial Committee decision.

Generally speaking Leagues and tournaments are responsible for initiating the action (which might be suspension, fines, bonds, etc.), and OASA is responsible for providing player card control and a structure for appeals. That structure ensures that Leagues cannot suspend players unfairly, but also ensures that players can not repeat a pattern of abusive behavior by moving from league to league (or indoor center). Instead, the discipline record and suspension stays with the player, allowing for disciplinary consistency and a more pleasant playing experience for everyone.

- The most common exception to League jurisdiction is in the case of referee abuse or assault. In those cases OASA has jurisdiction and the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee will hold a hearing to determine if referee abuse or referee assault occurred.

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Information for Players

In the course of a playing career, most players do not get more than a few red cards, and the vast majority of those are for routine things that merit a minimum suspension of (depending on league or tournament rules) a game or two and paying an administrative fee to get their card back.

Although many players who get a routine red card feel that it is unjust, it is not worth it for the vast majority to appeal, since the fee to appeal is \$25 and it can take 30 days or so to get a hearing, during which time the player remains suspended. Most choose not to appeal the minimum suspension and most of those who do are unsuccessful.

One thing that can seem especially unfair is that if a player is suspended by one league, they are suspended from all affiliated leagues. That means that while a player is serving a “two-game” suspension in one league they could miss several additional games. However, that outcome is necessary because of the administrative nature of the system, and hopefully red cards are a rare occurrence for most players.

In order to provide some perspective on what is considered a “routine” red card, it is worth noting that OASA has over 6,000 registered players playing in thousands of games each year. In an average year referees issue about 130 red cards. In other words, about 2% of players get a red card in a given year.

However, there are several red card and disciplinary situations that are not considered to be routine, and they generally fall into one of the following five categories.

1. A very serious event, usually some sort of violence.
2. An extensive judicial history or other extenuating circumstances.
3. Referee Abuse or Assault.
4. Playing or attempting to play while suspended. - Which requires a one-year MINIMUM additional suspension.
5. Playing or attempting to play using a fraudulent card (either someone else’s or the player’s own card that has been tampered with).

These situations can lead to serious penalties, long suspensions, fines, posting a bond, etc. The suspensions can last for years in very serious cases.

In situations where a player is involved in a potential referee abuse or referee assault case, by USSF rules, OASA has jurisdiction (rather than the league or tournament). In those cases the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee will act as the initial hearing board. They will hold a hearing within 30 days of the date the referee report is filed and will issue a final OASA decision. Referee Assault is very serious and carries the following minimum penalties mandated by USSF:

- The player, coach, manager, or official committing referee assault is automatically suspended as followed:
 - Minimum 3 months for minor or slight touching
 - Minimum 6 months for other assault, except as follows:
 - 5 Year minimum with serious injury
 - 3 Year minimum for an adult defendant with a minor referee (17 years of age or under) unless it is a minor or slight touching, in which case the normal 3 month minimum applies
 - If circumstances warrant, longer suspensions may be imposed.

Referee abuse is also a serious offense and requires a minimum 3 game suspension, but it may also involve a longer suspension if warranted by the circumstances. A player who is found guilty of referee assault or abuse may appeal a decision by the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee to the United States Soccer Federation Appeals Committee.

In cases that do not involve referee abuse or referee assault, the League will notify the player of the charges, the time and place of any hearing, and the applicable rights afforded to that player, including the right to appeal the League's decision to the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee and an explanation of how to exercise that right.

As noted, players may appeal a league's disciplinary decision to the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee. The player may appeal the suspension itself, or they can appeal the manner in which a suspension is served. For example, if a player were to get a red card in the last game of a season, and the league were to suspend that player for two games, that player would not be able to play in any league until the league play in which the suspension occurred resumes, and the two game suspension is served in that league. In that case, it is possible that the length and practical effect of the suspension would be inconsistent with the offense. The player could appeal the manner of the suspension to the OASA Discipline & Appeal Committee, and request that the suspension be served during an alternative league or tournament.

The Rights of a Player Who is subject to a Hearing

As a player, you have a right to attend the hearing and give evidence on your behalf, to call witnesses in your defense and to be assisted in presenting your case at the hearing. These rights are contained in USSF Bylaw 701 (5) and include:

You have the right to be notified of the specific charges or alleged violations. This notice should

- a. Be in writing, in English (other languages may be provided at the option of the league).
- b. Inform you of the possible consequences if the charges are found to be true.
- c. Give you reasonable time between the receipt of the notice and the hearing.
- d. Give you reasonable information about the format of the hearing, what evidence is allowed, any limitations on time, etc.

You have the right for the hearing to be conducted at a time and place so as to make it practicable for you to attend. Note: this does NOT mean that the hearing will be scheduled at your convenience, just that reasonable accommodations will be made to try to reschedule the hearing.

During the hearing:

- a. You have the right to have someone assist you in your defense. This person may be, but need not be, an attorney. Depending on the how the league conducts the hearing, this person may or may not be allowed to speak at the hearing, but is allowed to be present in the hearing room.
- b. You have the right to translation, at your expense; the hearing will be conducted in English.
- c. You have the right to present evidence and witnesses on your behalf. The league may limit the number and/or amount of time to present, but should always make sure that fairness, balance and impartiality are respected.
- d. You have the right to confront witnesses, including the right to be provided with the identity of witnesses in advance of the hearing.
- e. You have the right to a fair, impartial, disinterested panel of fact-finders.
- f. You have the right to have a record made of the hearing, at your expense, in a manner permitted by the league.
- g. You have the right to be informed about the process the panel will follow, including how and when you will be informed of the decision.

Following the hearing:

- a. You have the right to a written decision, in English, noting the reasons for the decision, and the procedures you must follow in order to appeal.

Fair Hearings

While conducting Appeals and Disciplinary activities, the autonomy of the Member leagues, along with the concerns of the State association, is underscored in this concept:

“Member leagues... May, by and large set the rules of hearings... so long as fair hearings are held...”

The operative phrase is “fair hearings”. A task seemingly simple enough, but a concept requiring continuous involvement and participation.

In this manual you will find helpful guides for conducting a fair hearing. We will lay out each step along the process of the hearing and include notes for what can and cannot be done to ensure all parties receive a fair hearing.

The applicable definition of hearing as prescribed by Webster: *A listening to facts and evidence, for the sake of adjudication; a session of a court for considering proofs and determining issues.* While certainly we are not in a legal court, we would do well to enter a hearing with the same approach. A hearing should be a place where facts come out and determinations are made to bring closure to acts or behaviors.

Discipline

According to the American Heritage Dictionary discipline is defined as: *To punish in order to gain control or enforce obedience.* Using this definition in our approach of conducting fair hearings will serve to remind us that the punishment must fit the offense.

If we approach hearings as an attempt to resolve conflicts we will be better fit to be fair to all parties involved. This includes the punishment phase as well as the hearing itself. The OASA exists to assist where needed and serve as a higher authority in the appeals and disciplinary process when needed. Neither discipline nor appeals should be taken lightly. Judicious use of the system as well as prudent exercise of authority will guarantee what is important comes first:

The Game of Soccer

Affiliated League Responsibilities

All Leagues are directed to form their own Judicial Committee and to hold hearings **with the parties having the right to be present** on every player/coach/manager/spectators as required for serious misconduct (that is, any action beyond the minimum suspension as set by the league – see: Minimum Suspension for more information). All Leagues are required to furnish OASA with an up-to-date list of their Judicial Chairman and Committee Members and their contact information, including email addresses.

Any misconduct by a player/coach/manager/spectator justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the League in which the incident occurred. The League shall promptly rule on the report and send its decision to the OASA. All suspensions must be reported to OASA.

Note: If the “accused” is not registered with a USSF affiliated entity, such as OASA, you almost certainly do not have jurisdiction.

The League Judicial Committees are encouraged to extend severe punishment to those player/coach/manager/spectators who are guilty of extreme violent conduct while participating in a match and for violence toward any person or property after being ejected, or approaching or leaving the game site.

Any report of assault or abuse by any person towards a game official must be submitted immediately to OASA for review and handling. Leagues have no jurisdiction in these cases.

Any report alleging misconduct by a referee must be submitted to OASA and to the Oregon Referee Committee (ORC) Professionalism Committee for review and handling.

Receipt of Misconduct Report

Referees and game officials are instructed to turn in written misconduct reports within 48 hours of game time. Under certain circumstances this may not be possible, but USSF/OASA and member leagues require this of their referees, assistant referees, and game day officials. In the event the referee's report comes in after the allotted time period, it should not be considered invalid, but rather given its full weight. Instances where the referee has failed to turn in a misconduct report in a timely manner may necessitate a reminder by the assignor or league official. A Referee's continued failure to report misconduct should be forwarded to the Oregon Referee Committee (ORC) Professionalism Committee.

The referee's misconduct report is required to implement league rules with regard to suspensions. A hearing with written record is required to enable the League Judicial Committee to issue additional punishment beyond the minimum required by league rules. League Judicial Committees may issue more severe disciplinary action than required by league, OASA or USSF rules,

No disciplinary action beyond the minimum required by league rules may be issued without the individual being given the opportunity to appear before the Judicial Committee following proper notice. A longer than minimum suspension must never be handed down before a hearing to an individual without the person having the right to a hearing with the exception where there is concern for the safety of the participants at stake, or the issue is in regards to referee assault or abuse in which case the individual is suspended and OASA will hold the hearing.

A red card (send off) **may not** be overturned or thrown out. In certain circumstances it may be reduced to a yellow card but solely under the following conditions:

1. The offense is one clearly not an ejectionable one under the Laws of the Game; or
2. The referee has recanted their testimony or changed their report

Judgment calls, opinions, and outside testimony do not validate reducing a red card to a yellow card. In the event a red card has been reduced to a yellow card, notification must be sent to the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee along with written justification within five days.

As noted above, any report of assault or abuse by any person toward a game official must be submitted immediately to OASA for review and handling. These cases are heard solely by the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee

Any written report alleging misconduct by a referee must be submitted to OASA for review and handling. All matters involving apparent misconduct by a referee or game official will be the responsibility of the Oregon Referee Committee (ORC) Professionalism Committee.

The Role of the Referee(s)

At the average amateur soccer game the referee crew members are the only neutral parties present because the teams and spectators are all interested parties. Therefore when the referee reports misconduct on their game report, it is generally taken as fact unless and until it is proven otherwise (usually this means the referee recants statements made on the report).

Referees should be invited to hearings regarding misconduct arising from games which they have officiated unless the judicial committee chair believes that fairness is better served by their absence. However, they are not required to attend even if invited, and their report stands as their testimony if they do not attend.

Often, especially in cases of referee abuse or assault, the accused will invoke some version of the “referee was bad, and therefore I...” defense. Not only should the hearing board not entertain this notion, the chairman is encouraged, especially in those hearings where the actions of the referee may be controversial, to state clearly at the beginning of the hearing, that the referees report is being entered into the record as fact, that comments regarding the performance of the referee are not in order, and that the proper forum for a complaint about the referee is to put it in writing and address it to the Professionalism Committee of the Oregon Referee Committee c/o OASA.

One concept that is sometimes difficult for the referee to understand, the referee is not a party to this hearing, even in cases of referee assault (in legal terms that would be *OASA V. Player name*). Therefore the referees are not entitled to the rights of the accused or of the victim (strange as it may seem, especially if you were the one punched, OASA is the “victim”), nor do referees receive notice of the decision, and they do not have the right to appeal if they feel justice has not been done.

However, in cases of referee assault, particularly serious assault, referees are encouraged to contact the police and/or file civil charges; those proceedings are outside the realm of this handbook.

Minimum Suspensions

One important concept is that Leagues have wide latitude to determine the penalty for any given misconduct. However, the League MUST hold a hearing for each and every instance where the penalty is greater than the minimum suspension.

What is the minimum suspension? Unless the League has a rule otherwise, the minimum suspension following a red card is one game.

This suspension is automatic, the player should be notified in writing by the League and the player will need to pay an administrative fee to OASA in order to get their card back following their suspension.

If a League has a one-game minimum suspension and does not hold a hearing during that week and notify OASA, the card will be returned. Some Leagues choose to hold judicial hearings each week and hear every red card case.

A League may have a longer minimum suspension, such as two-games, or have a “penalty table”, for example:

These 7 reasons are the offenses which merit ejection (red carding). The penalties listed are hypothetical, and each league is free set its own table

1. is guilty of serious foul play 2 games minimum
2. is guilty of violent conduct 4 games minimum
3. spits at an opponent or any other person 4 games minimum
4. denies an opponent a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area) 1 game minimum
5. denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick 1 game minimum
6. uses offensive, insulting or abusive language 3 games minimum
7. receives a second caution in the same match 1 game minimum

Another system a league may use is penalty points; this can be used in conjunction with a penalty table or on its own. An example of this system would be (again, each League has wide latitude to determine the point thresholds, the penalties, etc., this is merely an example):

“Any player accumulating more than 10 penalty points during the season/year will be suspended for one game in addition to any other suspension warranted, such as the league minimum two-game suspension for a red card”.

Caution 1 point

Denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity 2 points

Spiting at opponent 10 points

And so on...in this example although the League has a two-game minimum suspension, the

practical effect for spitting is a three-game suspension. Note: the league is responsible for tracking points and notifying players and OASA of required suspensions under a point system. A League can add additional levels of suspension for point accumulation, different point total for the 7 cautionable offenses, etc.

Another penalty system sometimes used is the accumulation of cards. For example, if a player receives five (5) yellow cards during the season/year they are suspended for one-game. Or, any player receiving a second red card during a season is suspended for the remainder of that season *at a minimum*. Again, the League is responsible for tracking this and notifying players and OASA of suspensions.

These are only a few of the possible systems that a league might use. As always, the bottom line is fairness. Each League must set up a system and follow it. The League must consistently follow all guidelines, especially regarding notifying players and other due process elements.

Team Penalties

Actions a League can take for team penalties:

Each League may also set up a system for team penalties. For example, a League may set up a penalty point system similar to the one outlined above for players. If a team reaches a certain level they lose point(s) in the standings, or lose the right to advance, or the right to register for the next season. Alternatively the League could offer “sportsmanship” awards to teams that accumulate the fewest number of penalty points and/or are rated highly on sportsmanship on referee reports. Probably the ideal situation is to set up a system that includes both a penalty component and a reward component.

If a League holds a hearing (again with proper notice, allowing involved parties to testify, etc.), the League can sanction a team by fining them, requiring a bond, not allowing them to re-register, taking points in the standings, not allowing them to play in playoffs, requiring them to perform some community service or disbanding them (usually in the form of not allowing more than 6 or 7 of them to register for any team in your league) – the League is responsible for tracking these penalties and notifying both the team and OASA.

Actions a League cannot take for team penalties:

There are however, limits to actions a League can take to penalize a team, and this can be an area of frustration for the League. A League cannot suspend all the players on a team, nor force a team or players to testify at a disciplinary hearing. A League must hold a hearing for, and make a case against each individual the League seeks to suspend.

The most common example is the case of a brawl on the field, involving multiple players. The referees may be able to identify a few players, but they know that several more were involved, and therefore they keep all the player cards and report the incident.

A League can hold a hearing, and following due process guidelines. If the League can make a

case against any individual you can (CAREFULLY follow the “rights of parties” section) suspend that individual. However, the League must carefully follow the requirements of the “rights of the parties” section of this handbook for each of the accused players and/or coaches. The League may also sanction the team under an established team sanction policy, but following the hearing the League must release the player cards of all individuals against whom they cannot make a case. A League may not hold the cards (suspend players) until a team fine is paid, or otherwise punish those who cannot be proven guilty.

Notification of Minimum Suspension

A League can simplify the disciplinary process, and reduce the number of hearings by setting up a minimum suspension or penalty table to deal with run of the mill red cards. League disciplinary committees can also work with the OASA Discipline & Appeals Chairman and the OASA Office to draft letters to handle routine cases (i.e., no judicial history, no extenuating circumstances). The important thing is to set up a system that works for the League and the disciplinary committee that also provides all players with proper notice of their suspension and their appeal rights. The OASA office will handle many of the administrative tasks, provided the League works with us to make sure the system provides due process and also does not unfairly burden our office staff.

A little bit of work up front by each League will save lots of work and headaches in the end. Set the minimum suspension, draft some form letters to cover most situations and the job of the disciplinary committee will likely be very easy. However, Leagues and disciplinary committees who choose not do these things in advance will likely find themselves holding more hearings than necessary and/or struggling with administration of the disciplinary system.

Receipt of Complaint

From time to time the League will receive complaints or protests they believe merit a hearing. Players, park and city officials, coaches, and others may provide reasons to set up a hearing. All protests must be put in writing and contain the name of the complainant. Should the party alleging the complaint not wish to put it in writing, no further action of the League Judicial Committee is required or warranted.

There are also reports given to the League Judicial Committee which should not be valid reasons to conducting a hearing. Some examples are:

- Ability or judgment of referee
- Personality conflict between people
- Reports without a specific or tangible occurrence of misconduct
- Oral or anonymous reports

Once the League Judicial Committee Chairman has received the letter of complaint, he or she should determine the validity of the request and may require contacting the complainant for clarification. Remember, the main goal in setting up a hearing is to present a fair and impartial forum that brings closure to an event or complaint. In an attempt to stay as unbiased as possible, only the League Judicial Committee Chairman should have advance notification of the subject matter to be heard. The correlation between a Judicial Committee hearing and a courtroom setting would be the Judicial Committee Chairman would preside as the hearing authority much like a judge. The Committee would be representative of the jury, the complainant would be the accuser, and the defendant would be the party for whom the hearing was requested. For this purpose, the Judicial Committee Chairman should validate the reason for the hearing without doing investigative work. It is not the responsibility of the Judicial Committee Chairman to prove or disprove the allegation, only to decide whether the complaint has enough merit to be heard.

In cases where the Judicial Committee Chairman believes there is not enough material to convene a hearing or the complainant believes it could be settled in a friendly manner, he or she may do so after consulting with the Member League Judicial Committee.

It is a requirement for the Judicial Committee Chairman to have enough knowledge of the situation at hand in order to select a fair and unbiased panel. The panel convened will be covered later in this manual, but the intent is for the Judicial Committee Chairman to proceed based on limited knowledge he or she is afforded at the time.

In matters where the League Judicial Committee Chairman is unsure what the rights of the complainant or the accused are as to whether this should or should not justify a hearing, the OASA Discipline & Appeals Chairman may be consulted.

Rights of the Parties

This chapter defines due process and is the largest single reason for appeals in both OASA and the USSF. Of all chapters in this book, this is probably the most important! Everyone involved in the discipline process should familiarize themselves with this section and ensure hearings are run accordingly. The rights of the parties are listed and are guaranteed by U.S. Soccer Bylaw 701.

Leagues will provide equitable and prompt hearing and appeal procedures to guarantee the rights of individuals to participate and compete and ensure due process to the accused. In all hearings conducted, the parties shall be accorded the following:

- 1 Notice of all specific charges or alleged violations in writing and possible consequences if the charges are to be found true;
- 2 Reasonable time between receipt of the notice of charges and the hearing within which to prepare a defense;
- 3 The right to have the hearing conducted at a time and place so as to make it practicable for the person charged to attend;
- 4 A hearing before a disinterested and impartial body of fact finders;
- 5 The right to be assisted in the preparation of one's case at the hearing;
- 6 The right to call witnesses and present oral and written evidence and argument;
- 7 The right to confront witnesses, including the right to be provided the identity of witnesses in advance of the hearing if requested;
- 8 The right to have a record made of the hearing if requested in advance, with all costs to be paid by the requestor;
- 9 The right to have testimony translated if requested in advance, with all costs to be paid by the requestor;
- 10 A written decision, with the reasons for the decision, based solely on the evidence of record issued in a timely fashion and including appeal rights and procedures;
- 11 Notice of any substantive and material action of the hearing panel in the course of the proceedings;
- 12 Equality concerning communications and no ex parte communication is permitted between a party and any person involved in making a decision or procedural determination except to provide explanations involving procedures to be followed.

Notification of Hearing

Following an issuance of a red card, or a request for hearing, the next step in the process is for the League Judicial Committee Chairman to verify whether there is sufficient reason to merit a hearing. Assuming the request has been validated, the Chairman would then set up a hearing. He or she needs to define a date, time, and place for the hearing to be held and notify the parties involved. Notification of the hearing may be done by telephone (with a written follow-up), by mail, by fax, by e-mail, by Mailgram, or by telegram. Whatever method is used, follow-up notification should always be in writing with proof of delivery. This provides you with proof that notification was provided, and when it was received. Notification should be provided to all involved parties at the same time. Unless competition dictates otherwise, a minimum of seven (7) days and a maximum of 14 days should be allowed for the accused to adequately prepare his defense. In the event it becomes necessary to hold a hearing on very short notice, a follow-up notification should be sent via certified mail noting the time and place of the hearing and also noting the current letter is a reconfirmation of a previous oral notification.

The notification **MUST** contain:

- 1 A statement of the reason for the hearing with all specific charges or alleged violations in writing
- 2 Possible consequences if the charges are to be found true
- 3 A copy of the primary complaint against the accused
- 4 The time, date, and place of the hearing
- 5 An outline of the procedures to be followed such as who will be allowed to testify and any time limits to be imposed
- 6 A date by which any written testimony is to be received

The notification for these hearings is **extremely important** so as to provide appropriate due process. The League Judicial Committee Chairman will need to review the complaint in its entirety, and the letter written citing all possible charges which may be included, and what the range of punishment could be if those charges are found to be true. Keep in mind due process is not a luxury, it is a requirement.

Hearings should not be held at the same time as board meetings. The two types of meetings are not complementary, and might involve unnecessary participation of the higher authority should either party wish to appeal the decision made at the hearing. The next level of appeal should remain uninvolved to ensure impartiality.

Selecting a Committee

It is the responsibility of the League to maintain and provide to OASA the name of the Judicial Committee Chairman and also to provide a list of the Committee Members and contact information. Most leagues will have three to five standing members on their committee, which may include members of your league board, as long as the league board is NOT where the decision is appealed. Leagues are encouraged to have a larger pool of committee members from which to select your panels for each hearing.

There are some common sense rules to remember when selecting your panel from your leagues Judicial Committee Members. The overall purpose is to provide a fair and impartial hearing. No one can be impartial when his or her child or team is involved. No one can reach a fair decision when he or she is affected by the outcome. Friendships should be set aside, and every effort must be made to be as unbiased as possible.

It is highly recommended to have Committee Members who have varying degrees of experience inside your organization. This provides the Chairman the opportunity to select panel members who are as far removed from the case as possible. In no case, however, should minors be a part of a Judicial Committee.

The hearing Committee **MUST** be impartial. It is recommended three to five persons constitute the Committee (inclusive of the Chairman). **NO** member should be involved in the circumstances being heard, nor in any way, closely associated with any of the involved parties. If necessary, alternate members should be available should such an involvement or affiliation exist. It is suggested you have an odd number of voting panel members, so as to reduce the possibilities of having a tie during the deliberations.

In the event the Chairman feels strongly he or she cannot provide a fair and impartial panel, they may contact the OASA Discipline & Appeals Chairman for guidance and available options.

Hearing Preparation

Once notification has been sent out to all parties detailing the specific charges to be addressed at the hearing, the Judicial Committee Chairman must prepare for the hearing itself. Copies should be made of all information relative to the charges or testimony and presented to each participant and panel member so they may look at their own copy. Included in the packet of information should be an outline of the procedures to be followed during the hearing. Details should be included as to the Participants, date, time, and place along with Committee Members names. (A sample form is included.)

The room for the hearing should afford reasonable comfort. There should be adequate seating for all participants, equipped with the basic amenities for the benefit of those in attendance. The room should be laid out so each participant is equidistant from the hearing Committee. The layout of the room should be one conveying fairness and impartiality.

The time chosen for a hearing should be one which provides the minimum inconvenience for the parties concerned. In the event either party is unable to attend the hearing with sufficient reason, the Judicial Committee Chairman should re-schedule if possible. However, the hearing should not be unduly delayed by constant re-schedules. If the participant is continually unable to attend, he or she should submit their testimony in writing prior to the hearing so the hearing may go forward.

The League Bylaws and this OASA Handbook should be on hand for reference should any Committee Member deem reference to be in order.

Hearing Procedures

The following are the procedures to be followed during the hearing:

1. The Judicial Committee Chairman shall call the meeting to order
2. Introductions should be made detailing what everyone's role will be
3. Chairman will call for the name and position relative for all participants
4. Chairman will note that proper decorum will be maintained throughout the proceedings
5. The charges will be stated and procedures for the hearing itemized inclusive of time restrictions
6. The party alleging the complaint will be allowed time for testimony from themselves and witnesses
7. The opposing party (or alleged violator) will be allowed equal time and opportunity
8. Committee members will be allowed time for questions and cross-examination
9. Both parties allowed equal time for closing statements and arguments
10. Chairman will detail the time and place for the Committee to reach its final decision
11. Chairman notifies all participants of the manner in which they will be notified of the decision
12. Chairman adjourns the hearing

All appeals, including all written materials such as decisions, transcripts, notes, affidavits, etc. **MUST** be in English. Each person charged has the right to have the hearing conducted in English, however, if both the league and the person charged agree (and this should be in writing, signed by the person charged) to have any or all of a hearing in a language other than English, that is acceptable, but the league is responsible for making sure all materials are accurately translated to English for appeals.

How To Properly Run a Disciplinary Hearing

Under USSF Bylaw 701 any hearing held by the USSF or any of its Organization Members involving the right to participate or compete must provide certain minimum rights to the parties for whom the hearing is held.

(1) Notice of the specific charges or alleged violations in writing and possible consequences if the charges are found to be true prior to any disciplinary hearing, the organization holding the hearing must send out a written notice of that hearing to the parties. That notice must provide answers to the following questions:

Who is being charged/accused?

What are the charges being brought? What incident/behavior forms the basis for these charges? What rule(s), bylaw(s), or policies are alleged to have been violated?

If the charges are found to be true, what are the possible consequences? What penalties are available? What is the maximum penalty possible?

When and where will the hearing take place?

What procedural rules will apply to the hearing?

When will a decision be rendered (in accordance with State or local rules)?

(2) Reasonable time between receipt of the notice of charges and the hearings within which to prepare a defense. There is no specific amount of time that must be provided between notice and the actual hearing - it must simply be "reasonable." This will depend on the method of notice, the nature of the charges, etc., but generally one week will be considered "reasonable." If a party asks for an extension of time, it is probably most appropriate to grant it - at least if it is the first such request - in order to ensure that there is sufficient time to prepare a defense. The time of notice is generally deemed to be whenever it is deposited in the mail, or otherwise sent out (by FedEx, facsimile, etc.). It is recommended that the written notice be sent in a way that provides a written receipt to the sender, to avoid having the issue of notice become an issue on appeal.

(3) The right to have the hearing conducted at a time and place so as to make it practicable for the person charged to attend. Whether the time and place for a hearing is "practicable" will depend on the specific circumstances: the distance from the party's home to the place of hearing, the party's work schedule, etc. Generally, if a party asks for a hearing to be rescheduled due to a scheduling conflict or difficulty in appearing at the hearing, it is probably most appropriate to grant the request - at least if it is the first such request - to ensure that it is practicable for the person to attend the hearing.

(4) a hearing before a disinterested and impartial body of fact-finders It is advisable to select hearing panels in a way that excludes not only those who are clearly interested in the outcome, but also anyone that would appear to be interested, partial, or biased. In other words, if a panel member would appear to be biased to an objective outsider, they should not be on the panel, even if in reality they are unbiased and

impartial. There is no specific set of people who must be excluded, but the following are some examples of people who are less likely to qualify as "disinterested" and "impartial":

Family members or close friends of any of the parties

The individual who actually filed the complaint or report that led to the charges

In an appeal, an individual who had any role in making the decision that is on appeal

Anyone who is a witness at the hearing

(5) the right to be assisted in the presentation of one's case at the hearing A person giving assistance may be, but does not have to be, an attorney. The person assisting must be allowed to attend the hearing. Leagues, clubs, States, etc. should be careful to set its rules and regulations so that they do not keep the person assisting out of the hearing room. There is no requirement that the person assisting be allowed to speak at the hearing on behalf of the party - this will depend on the rules governing the hearing. However, the person assisting must be permitted to participate to the same extent as the opposing party's assistant. For instance, if the State representative is allowed to question witnesses directly, the accused's assistant should also be given this opportunity. Bylaw 701 does not require that the person assisting be allowed to take control over the hearing, or attempt to conduct the hearing as if it were a trial in Federal or state court - the hearing should be conducted in accordance with applicable rules.

(6) The right to call witnesses and present oral and written evidence and argument .While a party should be allowed to present their case and a full defense to any charges, there are limits to that right. For instance, while a party has a right to "call witnesses," these hearings do not take place in a court of law, and there is no way to mandate that a certain witness appears at the hearing. If a witness refuses to appear, and a party thus has no opportunity to question him or her, this does not mean that the party was denied due process. A league, club, or state association may reasonably limit the introduction of evidence or the questioning of witnesses. For instance, if a party brings twelve character witnesses to a hearing, the hearing panel may limit their testimony by number of witnesses or time. However, where a party brings three eyewitnesses who can testify as to what actually occurred during an incident, it may be appropriate to allow all three to testify. It is in the discretion of the State, league, etc. to determine what should be allowed - but the party must be provided a reasonable opportunity to present his/her case.

(7) The right to confront witnesses, including the right to be provided with the identity of witnesses in advance of the hearing. While a party to a hearing has the right to confront witnesses that appear at the hearing, this does not apply to witnesses who do not appear at the hearing. For instance, if a witness sends in a letter, but refuses (or is unable) to appear at the hearing, the panel may consider the letter even though the witness was not "confronted." (However, when a written statement is provided to the panel, the accused party should be given a copy of that statement and a chance to answer the allegations in it). Generally, of course, a reasonable effort should be made to have witnesses appear at the hearing, especially if their testimony is critical to the issues before the panel. If a party specifically requests that a certain witness be present, that witness should be encouraged to attend. If an important witness has limited availability, the panel should consider scheduling the hearing so as to fit that witness's schedule. If a witness does testify for one party, the other party should, in most cases, be afforded the opportunity to cross-examine the witness, or at least to ask questions through the panel. The organization running the hearing should notify the parties that they have the opportunity to learn the identity of witnesses in advance of the hearing, and should encourage the parties to exchange witness lists. If a party has no notice of a witness, the panel should consider allowing that party additional time to prepare for the witness. This consideration should take into account the importance of the testimony, the degree of surprise to the party not having notice, any efforts the party made to learn of potential witnesses before the hearing, and the possible harm to the party not having notice.

(8) The right to have a record made of the hearing if desired While it is advisable for organizations to record all hearings, for many organizations this may not be practicable. At a minimum, therefore, they must provide the opportunity for a recording if requested, at the requesting party's expense. If a party asks a written transcript of a hearing, they may be required to pay for the cost of the transcription without violating their due process rights.

(9) A written decision, with reasons for the decision, based solely on the evidence of record, issued in a timely fashion. A decision should be issued in writing to the accused. That decision should include the specific finding of the hearing panel - a description of the charges for which the accused was found guilty, the facts that led to that decision, and the discipline imposed. This should be something more than "The committee finds you are in violation of the rules and thus suspends you for ten years." Instead, it should provide more detail. For instance, "The committee finds that you punched a referee in the nose, causing him physical injury. This constitutes "referee assault" under U.S. Soccer Policy 531-9, and the committee hereby imposes a one year suspension in accordance with Section 4(a) of that Policy." The panel should decide the case based purely on the evidence before them - not their outside dealings with either party or rumors they heard outside of the hearing. The decision should, ideally, inform the accused as to the next procedural option. Specifically, it is advisable to tell the party if there is a right to an appeal, where any appeal should be filed, how long they have to file the appeal, and the amount of any appeal fee.

(10) Notice of any substantive and material action of the hearing panel in the course of the proceedings. If the panel decides during the course of the hearing or deliberations that it needs to proceed in some way that was not originally planned, such as considering a new witness, or asking for additional arguments, the panel should notify the parties.

(11) Quality concerning communications and no ex parte communication is permitted between a party and any person involved in making its decision or procedural determination except to provide explanations involving procedures to be followed. Every effort should be made to determine the current address of the accused, and to keep the accused well-informed of the proceedings. There should be no "ex parte" communications - these are communications about the substance or merits of the hearing that are held outside the presence of everyone concerned. For instance, if a League president accuses a coach of violating a rule, the League president should not discuss the case with a member of the hearing panel in private before the actual hearing. The accused also should not discuss any issues with any panel member. Copies of any written communications with the panel should be sent to each of the parties involved in the hearing.

Guidelines and Recommendations

During the hearing, proper notes should be taken by the Chairman or designate for reference should the Committee request during deliberation. It is also advisable for the Chairman to have these notes as a reference should either party appeal the decision of this Committee. These notes need not be all encompassing, and are most often personal notes of the hearing but may be a record of validating or implicating statements made during the course of the hearing.

Testimony of witnesses of both parties should be allowed, but caution used as to how many may speak. The time given should be sufficient to hear testimony from these witnesses, but equal time and opportunity must be given to the opposing party. Keep in mind you do not wish to have repetitive statements, but if the accused feels as though the testimony is vital he or she may wish for it to be incorporated. Another way to approach this would be to request all testimony in writing prior to the hearing if there may be multiple witnesses. A benefit to stipulating a time constraint in advance will help you to limit repetitive testimony.

The accused party should be present at all times during testimony. The rights of the accused stipulate they have the right to face their accusers and confront their testimony. It should be apparent at all times throughout the procedure that everything is totally beyond reproach. It may be a good idea to ask both parties if they have questions of the other. Proper decorum needs to be maintained throughout the hearing, and if this is strictly adhered to, in most cases the parties will be able to ask questions without risking disruption.

Hearsay and verbal testimony other than what has occurred during the hearing should not be included in the Committee's decision.

Make sure the hearing progresses along the lines of its intent. Keep in mind what the specific charges are for which the accused is present, and of what he or she has been notified. If additional items surface during the hearing which could be cause for other charges levied against the accused your options are:

1. Disregard the new items and stay the course for which they are present
2. Continue with the hearing, and schedule another hearing for the new charges (decisions made should only involve the charges for which they are present)
3. Suspend the hearing and re-send notification of a new hearing time and date with the additional charges
4. Allowing the accused the option of continuing with the new charges for which he or she may not be adequately prepared (not suggested without documenting their agreement).

The Judicial Committee Chairman must advise both parties of the next step of their appeal rights.

Determining the Result

Following the hearing and in accordance with the time, date, and place for the decision to be made as stipulated by the Judicial Committee Chairman, begins the deliberations. The Committee should be advised to consider the evidence brought before them and not to allow outside factors to impact their decision.

Not all hearings will result in the accused being found to have committed the offense, but whenever found so; a good rule of thumb to keep in mind is “**The punishment must fit the offense**”.

Far too often Committee Members fail to carry out responsibilities for various reasons. These reasons may range from the inability to issue harsh punishment to being overzealous in doing the same. From the “bleeding heart” to the “hanging judge”. Obviously, a comfortable middle ground for the conscientious Committee Member is desirable.

After hearing all the facts related to the offense and before entering the discipline phase of the hearing, each Committee Member should mentally “check off” the following questions before assessing punishment:

- 1 How serious is the offense for which punishment is prescribed?
- 2 Is the punishment assessed in the best interest of all involved? (League, OASA, and soccer in general)
- 3 How will other people be affected by the discipline?
- 4 How deeply, if at all, are personal feelings involved in the decision?
- 5 Does the punishment fit the offense?
- 6 Is it intended to “suspend from all soccer activities” or only certain soccer activities (such as coaching) or “place on probation”?

Basically, the key to remember is fairness to all involved. Remember, the intent is to “correct or train”. As stated earlier, the major concern here is the resolution of conflicts. Those involved in conflict resolution must realize the importance of what the job entails. It is not an activity to be taken lightly. Many individuals are affected by the decisions made.

The determination should be made and specifically stipulated as to the intent of the findings. If the violator is to be suspended, he or she needs to know from what (which activities). In other words, are they to be placed on suspension from player or from all soccer related activities? (leagues should be EXTREMELY careful when considering sanctions that extend beyond playing – you can quickly get into restraint of trade issues, this caveat also applies when dealing with professional players, consider the full scope of the punishment) The time period involved also needs to be stipulated (in either number of games or a set number of weeks, months or years). For those placed on probation, the violator needs to know what the terms of that probation are. What constitutes non-compliance with the probation? Specific rules should be referenced in the decision whether from the League or OASA Bylaws or policies.

Penalties

The League judicial committees have wide range to determine penalties. However, the penalty should be fair and reasonable, and the person facing the penalty has the right to appeal.

One reason for appeals is that any suspension must be for a “specified period of time”, in practice this means you cannot give a suspension for “life”, you can give some specified period of time such as: 99 years, or 50 year. Keep in mind that even a one-year suspension is fairly serious (twice the minimum penalty for referee assault), and in all but the most serious cases, or those with extenuation circumstances, such as an extensive judicial history, is likely to not be seen as fair and reasonable if appealed.

These are common forms of sanction used, but Leagues are not limited to these. The following penalties may be used in combination. With the exception of Suspension, the League will be responsible for tracking and administering these penalties.

1. Letter of reprimand
2. Probation
3. Exclusion from the league for a specified period of time or number of games
4. A fine
5. Requiring a bond be posted before return to play
6. Some form of “community service”
7. Suspension for a specified period of time or number of games

Sometimes judicial committees offer a reduced sentence in return for some form of community service, such as:

You are suspended for six-months; however, if you complete the USSF referee course and referee three games in our league, as of the date of the third game, your suspension will convert to probation for the remainder of the term.

Or

You are suspended for six-games and a \$500 fine; however, since you are a USSF licensed coach, if you agree to conduct a clinic for players in conjunction with our league, we will waive the fine, although you must serve the suspension.

Notification of Findings

Written notification of all Committee decisions **must** be provided to all parties involved. This written notification should include:

1. Decision of Committee
2. Rules applied to reach the decision
3. Appeal rights including fee, time frame for filing, and method of appeal
4. Copy sent to OASA Discipline & Appeals Chairman

It is highly suggested written notification be sent to the involved parties via certified mail with return receipt requested so the League knows when the recipient was officially notified of the hearing results.

All appeals to the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee must be submitted in writing and received within ten days of receipt of the appealed decision. The appropriate fee shall accompany all appeals. For good cause shown, the appeal fee may be waived

Once the written appeal is received the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee Chairman will then notify the involved League and all members of the Committee. In cases of controversy as to timely receipt of appeals, the postmark date will govern.

Upon receipt of an appeal, properly submitted, the Chairman of the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee shall set a time and place for a hearing and will advise all appropriate parties. Such hearing settings are solely the responsibility of the Committee, and the appeal shall be considered by the Discipline & Appeals Committee as soon as is reasonably practical under the circumstances. The appealing party is required to present all information and evidence relative to the appealing parties' case at the hearing.

The Right to Appeal

Appeals are a very important part of the discipline and appeals process. Protests are related to the actual competition on the field and involve misapplication of the rules or laws. Although they involve vastly different types of matters, the method of handling them is very similar.

The same steps apply here as were comprised in the request for hearing:

- 1 The request must be made in writing
- 2 Determination of the merit or validity of request
- 3 Chairman sets the time, date, and place for the appeal hearing
- 4 The appeal hearing follows the same guidelines and procedures as the initial hearing

The difference between the initial request for a hearing and a request for an appeal hearing is typically the grounds for the appeal. Typical grounds are:

- 1 Failure to comply with appropriate bylaws, rule, or regulations
- 2 A Bylaw, rule, or regulation fails to conform with the rules of OASA, USSF, or FIFA or the rule has been applied arbitrarily under the facts of the appeal
- 3 Disagreement as to the facts as determined by the entity whose decision is being appealed
- 4 Failure of the entity whose decision is being appealed to provide the party with due process

The most common reasons appeal hearings are granted, and could otherwise be avoided, involve a lack of due process. The two most common of those are not having a hearing before a fair and impartial committee, and lack of proper notification of their appeal rights. By following this guide, hopefully Leagues can avoid unnecessary appeals.

Sometimes the request for appeal is really only a grievance and is more appropriately handled through correspondence.

Should the protest not be accepted, or a hearing not be held for some reason, the appeal or protest fee should be returned.

Role of OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee

The role of the OASA Discipline & Appeals Chairman and the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee is to serve as a higher authority in the appeals and disciplinary process when needed. The OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee does not hover like a giant vulture ready to swoop down on the Leagues whenever a mistake is made. The OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee is comprised of volunteers, and we exist to offer a hand when requested. Through cooperation we will continue to grow and improve.

Feel free to contact the OASA office whenever you have questions or need input. One of our main goals is to make the job of our Leagues easier.

Sample Notices

(Sample Hearing Notification Letter)

Date

<<Name>> <<Team Name>> <<Address>> <<City, <<State>> << Zip>>

ORIGINAL SENT
CERTIFIED MAIL

Certified Receipt Number Dear. <<Name>>:

The <<LEAGUE>> Judicial Committee has received a report of alleged violations that potentially violate some or all of the following: <<applicable association and/or OASA rules>> These rules are available for download from the <<LEAGUE>> web site or a copy may be provided to you if request. <<ASSOCIATION WEB SITE ADDRESS, IF APPLICABLE>>

These are the specific charges rendered against you by, <<complainant's name(s)>> and will be argued as applicable in relation to the incident which occurred on <<game date>> while the <<team name>> was playing at <<location>>

All decisions will be made based on the specific charges listed above and any corresponding rule, bylaw, and policy that is found to have been violated.

Should you be found to have violated any of the aforementioned rules, your punishment could consist of as little as probation, or as much as suspension from all soccer activities for several years. If suspended from all affiliated soccer activities you would not be allowed to coach, play, referee or participate in any manner until the term of your suspension has been served or modified through the proper appeals process.

The <<LEAGUE>> Judicial Committee hearing has been **scheduled for** <<day and date>> **at** <<time>> at the <<location of hearing>>, <<address of location>>.

It is important that you be in attendance at this hearing to defend your position in this serious matter. It is imperative that you bring any witnesses with their written statements and/or other documentation pertinent to these charges to this hearing. In the event either party should appeal this committee's decision, consideration of appeal will be limited to the specific facts and issues contained in the documents presented at the initial hearing and only the appellant, appellee and two representatives for each side may give testimony at the appeal hearing. A copy of this letter is also being forwarded to you by regular mail. If you have any questions, please call the OASA office.

A copy of this letter is also being forwarded to you by regular mail. If you have any questions, please call << >>

Regards,

<<Name of Chairman, >> Chairman, <<LEAGUE>> Judicial Committee

Cc: <<team coach>>

<<team manager>> Enc: Letters of Complaint/Emails/Misconduct Repots

(Send copies of all documentation to be used in hearing to all parties involved—be certain to delete all personal information such as address, phone number, email address, date of birth)

(Sample Decision Letter)

Date

<<Name>> ORIGINAL SENT-CERTIFIED MAIL <<Team Nam>> Certified mail receipt # <<Address>>
<<City, State <Zip>>

Dear << name>>:

The <<LEAGUE>> Judicial Committee met on <<date of hearing>> to conduct a hearing regarding a report of allegations including <<rules: association and/or OASA rules which apply & must be the same rule(s) included in the hearing notification letter >> occurred on <<date>>at <<location of game.>>

After consideration of the testimony given and evidence presented, it is the decision of this committee, << name>>, that you are found to be in violation of << rule(s) found violated>> in the following manner:

<< rule & details if how decision was reached>> **EXAMPLE:** The committee took into account all testimony, reports, emails, and correspondence entered into evidence. It is the opinion of this committee, based on the testimony and evidence presented, that the coach's conduct was called into question when he had a confrontation with this player and may have been physical in nature. <<Coaches name>> should have conducted himself more appropriately. The committee finds there was not enough evidence to suggest acts of coach misconduct. This committee however feels that though the decision was not in violation, <<Coaches name>> hopefully will learn from this experience and in the future not be compelled to touch an opposing player.

If you commit any further acts of misconduct, you will be required to attend another hearing which may result in placing you on suspension for the remainder of the probationary period.

This decision may be appealed to the <<LEAGUE BOARD or OASA>>. In the event that either party should appeal this decision, consideration of appeals will be limited to the specific facts and issues contained in the documents presented at the <<LEAGUE>> Judicial Committee hearing and only the appellant, appellee and two representatives for each side may give testimony at the appeal hearing. This appeal must be in writing, within ten (10) days from receipt of this letter. The appeal must be accompanied by a <<\$ amount>> appeal fee, payable to <<League or OASAA>> copy of this letter is also being forwarded to you by regular mail. If you need additional information regarding the appeal process, please contact <<Name phone number email>>.

Regards,

<<Name of Chairman, Association Name>> Chairman, <<association name>> A&D Committee

Cc: <<All involved parties names/position>>
OASA Discipline & Appeals Chairman Enc: Appeal Form

(Sample Appeal Hearing Notification)

Date

<<Name>> <<Address>> <<City, State << Zip Code>>

ORIGINAL SENT-CERTIFIED MAIL Certified Receipt Number

Dear << Name>>:

The <<LEAGUE>> Board has received your request to appeal the decision of the <<LEAGUE>> Judicial Committee regarding the sanctions rendered against you.

The <<LEAGUE>> Board hearing has been **scheduled for** <<day, date>> **at** <<time>> at the <<location of hearing including address>> Oregon

It is imperative that you bring any witnesses with their written statement and/or other documentation pertinent to these charges to this hearing. In the event either party should appeal this committee's decision, consideration of appeal will be limited to the specific facts and issues contained in the documents presented at the initial hearing and only the appellant, appellee and two representatives for each side may give testimony at the appeal hearing.

A copy of this letter is also being forwarded to you by regular mail. If you have any questions, please contact << Name phone number email>>

Regards,

<< Chairperson's Name, Title>> Chairman, <<local association>> Judicial Committee

Cc: <<all parties and association affected>> , OASA Discipline & Appeals Chairman

<< LEAGUE >> Disciplinary Hearing

I. Player/Team/:

II. Date: Time:

III. Place:

IV. Participants: Name:

Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Team

Players

Coach

V. Procedure

A. Chairman will call hearing to order

1. Chairman will determine by statement:

- a. The Team/ Player/ Coach/ Others to be heard
- b. Noting the date, time, and place of the hearing
- c. Introduces him/herself and the Committee members

2. Chairman will call for the name and position relative to the hearing for:

- a. Team
- b. Player
- c. Coach
- d. Other

3. Chairman will note to the participants that decorum will be maintained.

Only one properly designated speaker will be allowed to speak when called for by the chairman and the procedure.

B. Chairman will call for argument by the team/ player/ coach/ other. (Limited to minutes presentation.

C. Chairman will allow cross-examination by the Committee of the team/ player/ coach/ other. (Limited to minutes).

D. Chairman will allow team/ player/ coach/ other final argument. (Limited to minutes).

- E. Chairman will allow Committee members final questions. (Limited to minutes).
- F. Chairman will set a place, time, and date for Committee to deliberate and reach a final decision on the hearing.
- G. Chairman will notify the team/ player/ coach/ other the manner in which they will be notified of the decision of the Committee inclusive of appeal rights.
- H. Chairman adjourns the hearing.

VI. Committee's Actions:

–

VII. Committee's Decision: _

(Sample Appeal Form) Notice of Appeal

Check only one:

OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee

A. Individual / Organization Filing Appeal: (“**Appellant**”) Name:

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip__
Telephone: h _____ w _____ fax _____
B. Email: _____

Opposing Party: (“**Appellee**”) Name:

C. Address: _____ City: _____ Zip _____
Telephone: h _____ w _____ fax _____
Email: _____

Committee Whose Decision is Being Appealed: (Last Heard By) Name:

Chairman:

Decision Date:

Appellant: Please be sure to attach a copy of the decision to this notice of appeal

D. Date Decision was received by Appellant: _____

E. Briefly List the Reasons You are Appealing this Decision: _

F. I hereby certify that I have sent a copy of this notice to the persons or organizations named in paragraphs B and C. I further certify that I have included the appropriate appeal fee of \$25.00 as provided in the decision letter (in the form of cashier’s check, certified check, or money order; payable to OASA) within the time frame allowable in the decision letter and conforming to the OASA guidelines.

Signature: Date:

OREGON ADULT SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Policies and Procedures

Subject: OASA Discipline & Appeals Policy

Effective Date: June 4, 2011

Date of Last Revision: None



1. All affiliated leagues shall form their own Judicial Committees and hold hearings in a manner consistent with the OASA Discipline & Appeals Manual for Affiliated Leagues and Players, and shall furnish the OASA Office with an up-to-date list of their Judicial Chairman and Committee members and their addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.
2. All those who are registered and affiliated with OASA must exhaust all appellate procedures of their affiliated leagues on all matters before OASA can acquire jurisdiction to hear appeals under its rules, except for those matters for which OASA has original jurisdiction.
3. Affiliated leagues and their Judicial Committees are urged to refuse to hear any appeal when any person is threatening a lawsuit, and instead should pass the appeal to the next higher forum which would hear it. This is a sport to which we are giving freely of our time, and none of us needs to take the trouble and expense to appear in court.
4. Should anyone, in violation of USSF Bylaw 707, resort to the courts without exhausting all avenues of appeal, including through to the USSF, the OASA may, at its discretion, suspend such person or refuse to accept further registration in soccer activities within its jurisdiction.
5. An appeal of decisions made by an affiliated league, after its appeal procedures have been exhausted, will be made to the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee in accordance with its established procedures.
6. An appeal of decisions made by the OASA Discipline & Appeals Committee will be made to USSF.