

**Massachusetts Youth Soccer Associations  
Policy and Procedures on  
MTOC Leagues Interleague Town Program Movement**

**Definitions**

- **MTOC** – The Massachusetts Tournament of Champions, organized annually as a competitive town-based championship for Mass Youth Soccer member organizations.
- **Program** – A member organization that participates in MTOC and is in good standing with both Mass Youth Soccer and all Leagues with which such Program is affiliated.
- **League** – An MTOC eligible affiliated League of Mass Youth Soccer.
- **Current League** – The League in which a Program currently plays and from which a Program desires to move.
- **Accepting League** – The League to which a Program desires to move.
- **President** – The President of Mass Youth Soccer.
- **Executive Director** – The Executive Director of Mass Youth Soccer.

A Program may consider moving from its Current League to an Accepting League (a “*move*”) only by following the process set forth in this policy.

In order to consider a move, a Program (i) shall have been established and playing in its Current League for at least three (3) full years (fall/spring) prior to being eligible to move, and (ii) shall be in good standing in all respects (financial and otherwise) with both the Current League and Mass Youth Soccer. Such move shall include the entire eligible travel soccer division of the Program.

Each of the Program, the Current League, and the Accepting League shall follow the process set forth in this policy and are required to document and record all meetings, actions, communications, and steps taken, should the need for adjudication arise.

Notices permitted or required under this policy shall be made in writing and as follows:

- If to Mass Youth Soccer, to the attention of the President and Executive Director.
- If to the Program, to the attention of the Program’s president or their designee made in writing.
- If to the Current League, to the attention of the Current League’s president or their designee made in writing.
- If to the Accepting League, to the attention of the Accepting League’s president or their designee made in writing.

References herein to “days” shall mean calendar days, unless otherwise indicated.

**Step 1: Initial Board Meeting(s)**

The Program shall hold one or more meetings of its board of directors (or similar body) to discuss and vote on a motion to explore making a move. The Program shall both document and publish the full motion and voting results in the minutes of such meeting(s).

## **Step 2: Notification to the Current League**

*Deadline: August 1 of the year prior to the proposed move.*

The Program shall notify the Current League in writing of its intention to explore a move, including identification of the Accepting League and a detailed explanation of its rationale supporting the proposed move. The intent of this step is to provide the Current League the opportunity to consider carefully the proposed move; to provide its feedback, including its reasoning for dissatisfaction (if any); and the opportunity for collaboration, communication, and improvement of relations between the Program and the Current League.

## **Step 3: Exploratory Discussions and Research**

Promptly following Step 2, the Program shall conduct internal interviews, discussions, meetings, or any other type of exploratory steps necessary or useful to ascertain if the proposed move is in the best interest of the entire Program.

Concurrently, the Program shall gather relevant information and feedback about other potential Accepting Leagues (if any), including where necessary or appropriate meetings with other potential Accepting Leagues and discussions with other Mass Youth Soccer member organizations.

This Step 3 should be completed leaving sufficient time for scheduling and holding the Program's board vote described in Step 4, below.

## **Step 4: Program Board Formal Approval**

The Program shall hold a follow-up meeting of its board of directors (or similar body) to review the internal feedback and information gathered on potential Accepting Leagues described in Step 3 and to discuss and vote on a motion to initiate a formal process to move. The Program shall document and publish the full motion and voting results in the minutes of such meeting.

## **Step 5: Informing Interested Parties**

*Deadline: October 1 of the year prior to the proposed move.*

Following a decision of the board of the Program to initiate a move process under Step 4, the Program shall so notify the Executive Director and the Current League.

If the Current League consents in writing to the proposed move, the parties shall move to Step 6 – Program Membership Approval.

The Current League may object to the proposed move if it provides notice thereof to the Program, the President and Executive Director, and the Leagues Committee. Such notice shall be provided (if at all) within 10 days following receipt of the Program's notice of intent to move. Failure of the Current League to timely object to the proposed move shall constitute the Current League's irrevocable consent to such move.

If Current League timely objects to the proposed move, the process will proceed to Steps 6 and 7, but these results will be considered provisional pending the outcome of reviews at the Leagues Committee and, if required, an Appeals Panel under Steps 8 and 9, respectively.

### **Step 6: Program Membership Approval**

Deadline: November 1 of the year prior to the proposed move.

An impartial electronic survey of the “Program membership” (as defined below) will be conducted by Mass Youth Soccer under the supervision of the Executive Director, in order to determine the Program membership’s approval of the proposed move.

“Program membership” is comprised of each household having one or more Mass Youth Soccer registered and affiliated players or registered adults during the current and immediately preceding soccer years (i.e., one household regardless of how many registered players and adults are so connected with that household) as determined by the Executive Director.

Each of the Program, the Current League, and the Accepting League may submit position statements for the Program membership’s consideration prior to conducting the survey, in accordance with requirements and timing determined by the Executive Director, in their discretion.

Approval of the Program membership requires the affirmative (written) support of both (i) a majority of those participating in the survey, plus (ii) at least 25% of total Program membership.

*Ex.: If the Program membership comprises 200 households and 100 households participate in the survey, then approval of the proposed move requires 51 households (i.e., a majority of those participating), since that threshold also satisfies the requirement that 25% of the total Program membership eligible to vote (i.e., 50 households) approve such move.*

If the Program membership does not so approve the proposed move, then the Program will be ineligible thereafter to apply for another move for two (2) years (i.e., no subsequent application to move may be made for a move to become effective sooner than two years following the year in which the initial move was intended to become effective).

### **Step 7: Accepting League Membership Approval**

Deadline: January 1 of the year of the proposed move.

Following Program membership approval under Step 6, the Accepting League shall provide to all of its member organizations full and complete disclosure of the facts and circumstances, rationales, and relevant information pertaining the proposed move, to allow for full consideration by such member organizations. Not less than 30 days after providing such disclosure, the Accepting League shall poll its member organizations (which may be at a meeting called for such purpose or in electronic form, following such procedures as may be directed or approved in advance by the Executive Director) on the question of approving the proposed move. Approval of such member organizations requires the affirmative vote of at least 66% of the total votes, as defined in or determined by the Accepting League’s governance documents. Prompt notice of such polling

results shall be given to the Program, the Current League, the Leagues Committee, and the President and Executive Director.

If within 30 days following the Accepting League's member organizations approving the proposed move, the Current League consents in writing to the proposed move, the vote of the Accepting League's member organizations will be considered a formal and final vote approving the proposed Program for Accepting League membership and such move shall be effective with the following soccer year.

If following the Accepting League's member organizations approving the proposed move, the Current League either fails to consent to the proposed move as provided in the immediately preceding paragraph or otherwise continues to object to the proposed move, the vote of the Accepting League's member organizations will be considered provisional and dependent on the outcome of the Leagues Committee decision as more particularly described in Step 8 and the Appeals Panel decision as more particularly described in Step 9.

### **Step 8: Presentation to Leagues Committee and Approval of MTOC-Affiliated Leagues**

*To occur following completion of Step 7.*

The Current League may challenge the approval of the proposed move by the Accepting League's member organizations by notifying the Program, the Accepting League, the Leagues Committee, and the President and Executive Director within 30 days following receipt of notice of the approval of the proposed move by the Accepting League's member organizations referred to in Step 7. Failure of the Current League to timely challenge approval of the proposed move shall constitute the Current League's irrevocable consent to such move.

Each party shall provide relevant documentation and be afforded the opportunity to present to the Leagues Committee and the President and Executive Director their respective positions on the proposed move. If both the Leagues Committee Chair and Vice Chair have an actual or perceived conflict of interest (as determined in the discretion of the President), the President will appoint a lead from among the remaining Leagues Committee members to oversee the presentations and provide a summary document on behalf of the Leagues Committee.

After reviewing the parties' documentation and presentations, a vote to approve the proposed move will be taken by the MTOC-eligible affiliated leagues, which may be at a Leagues Committee meeting or by written consent. The approval of a majority of all MTOC-eligible affiliated leagues is required to approve the proposed move.

Such vote will be recorded as part of the Leagues Committee's official proceedings, and a written summary will be disseminated promptly (but in any event within 10 days) to the Program, the Current League, the Accepting League, and the President and Executive Director.

The Program, the Accepting League, and/or the Current League may choose to accept the result of such vote or request that an Appeal Panel appointed to review the result of such vote regarding the proposed move, as provided in Step 9.

## **Step 9: Appeal of MTOC-Eligible Affiliated Leagues Decision**

*Decision deadline: Ninety (90) days following initiation of appeal process.*

Any of the Program, the Accepting League, or the Current League may appeal the decision of the MTOC-eligible affiliated leagues described in Step 8 by notifying the Program, the Accepting League, or the Current League (as applicable), the Leagues Committee, and the President and Executive Director within 10 days following receipt of the decision referred to in Step 8. The grounds for such challenge are limited to a material failure to follow the process set forth in this policy. Such basis shall be clearly explained in the notice of appeal. Failure of the Program, the Accepting League, or the Current League to timely object to the decision of the Leagues Committee shall constitute its irrevocable consent to such move.

Upon receipt of timely notice of a proper appeal, the President shall appoint a panel (“*Panel*”) of no less than three (3) impartial individuals to consider and decide such appeal. The parties shall promptly respond to questions and requests for information from the Panel and otherwise offer timely and full cooperation to the Panel as it considers such appeal.

Subject to the parties’ full and prompt cooperation with the Panel and its requests for information, the Panel shall provide its final determination and summary documentation within 90 days following initiation of the appeal process. If the Panel upholds the decision approving the proposed move, the vote of the Accepting League’s member organizations under Step 7 will be considered a formal and final vote approving the proposed Program for Accepting League membership and such move shall be effective with the following soccer year. The decision of the Panel shall be final and binding on the parties and not subject to further appeal or review.