



AYSO ALLIANCE PROGRAM OPERATIONS

DEFINITION

The purpose of the AYSO ALLIANCE program is to support the AYSO player development pathway to the highest levels of play. It is an integral part of the AYSO Club program's potential progression to AYSO United. To align with the AYSO player pathway, EXTRA should be utilized first, where a successful program is available. The Alliance program is primarily intended to be a volunteer run program that allows for paid trainers.

Each AYSO ALLIANCE program will operate in the best interest of the local Area and Regions with an emphasis on the player pathway and creating a positive learning environment for our players and coaches. The program will serve as an entry point for players into external competition circuits.

AYSO ALLIANCE teams are composed of players registered within AYSO, while also registered with US Youth Soccer or US Club Soccer. AYSO ALLIANCE teams, coaches and players have all the advantages of being part of AYSO and playing in external gaming circuits.

AYSO ALLIANCE teams consist of players who are selected through *open* tryouts and who want to play at a more competitive level within AYSO. AYSO ALLIANCE teams represent the National Program in their local ALLIANCE circuit as well as in inter-state tournaments. This opportunity to play may require team fundraising, and will likely involve team travel. While travel is authorized for AYSO ALLIANCE teams, it is not required for the AYSO ALLIANCE program.

Operating guidelines and directives fall under the authority of the AYSO Area or Region ALLIANCE Director and are outlined below. However, AYSO cannot control or be responsible for external playing circuit rules, requirements or decisions.

STRUCTURE

Each AYSO ALLIANCE program will report directly to the Area or Region ALLIANCE Director; however, management of day-to-day operations will remain local. Each Area or Region ALLIANCE will operate independently from other ALLIANCE programs allowing adjustments to market needs, demographics, structural changes.

It is expected that each program operates under the guidance of the ALLIANCE Operating Procedures to establish and maintain an agreed level of AYSO programming standards and quality.

Any interested AYSO ALLIANCE program MUST:

- Be approved by the local Area Director and Section Director, including communication with AYSO Office who will assist in establishing the program in compliance with expected standards and expectations.
- Complete an AYSO ALLIANCE Application to request approval.
- Be based in geographical Areas where there are supporting Regions, sufficient field requirements, demand for club soccer and availability of a club gaming circuit.
- Agree to all standards/expectations to ensure quality programming and AYSO representation.

- Pay the ALLIANCE Team Fee as set by Section, Area, or Region (see financial section).
- This is a Region/Area/Section program and all teams from the same Region will wear the same color/style of uniform within that Area/Section and will bear the AYSO ALLIANCE logo on the chest. Uniform colors in the ALLIANCE program may differ from program to program.
- Apply for reapproval every three (3) years.

PROGRAM SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION

- An Alliance program may be suspended with a majority vote of the Regional Board for a Regionally run program.
- An Alliance program may be suspended/terminated by an Area or Section Director for cause. The term “cause” shall include, but not be limited to, failure to comply with the provisions set forth in the AYSO Alliance program operations documents and/or AYSO’s policies and procedures.

Upon approval to the ALLIANCE Program, the following position is required within the ALLIANCE organization. Other positions may include a treasurer and a registrar but are not required.

ALLIANCE Director/President (appointed by the Area Director or Regional Commissioner)

Area or Region ALLIANCE Director MAY be the President to the State Association but, may not be nor will be an Executive Member of AYSO - May report to a State Association president, if in high volume markets (Southern California, Northern California). In situations where there are multiple Areas/Regions within a Section and a state that are participating in the same State Association with an ALLIANCE program, the appropriate Section Director will appoint a President.

- Be the point-of-contact and President of AYSO ALLIANCE within the State USYS affiliate.
- The Section Director has the authority to remove an Alliance President from a program within their Section.
- Develop an ALLIANCE operating budget.
- Attend all Section and Area meetings within AYSO.
- Attend all /State Association meetings/other meetings.
- As required, review ALLIANCE Operating Procedures to provide feedback to Section Director • Work with Supporting Regions to promote ALLIANCE.
- Utilize the ALLIANCE logo on the team uniforms. Use of the National Uniform sponsor is preferred but not required.
- May be a voting member of the program at the State association in concert with any existing United program leadership.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the AYSO ALLIANCE program is to:

- Promote AYSO's *Vision* to provide world-class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives.
- Protect our primary program through completion of a true player pathway.
- Provide an opportunity for players who wish to commit and play at a more competitive level.
- Retain and regain players, volunteers, and families in AYSO.
- Expand the existing programs with additional opportunities for different levels of play, creating an industry leading long-term player development model.
- Development and promotion of players to AYSO United.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Consistent development programs.
- Age-appropriate implementation of the four pillars of soccer (technical, tactical, physical, and psychosocial).
- Competitive training and playing environment at all ages.
- Elimination of parental agendas from the development process.
- Application of appropriate year-round programs (indoor, futsal, camps, clinics, etc.).

The objective of the AYSO ALLIANCE program is to create the right environment for *all* levels of soccer, including the elite player, enabling each player to reach their own true potential.

Goals and Objectives will be accomplished by utilizing and respecting the AYSO philosophies:

EVERYONE PLAYS®

- Our goal is for kids and adults to play soccer, so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least 50 percent of every game.

BALANCED TEAMS Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

- Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible, providing a stronger learning experience for teams as they play teams comprised of similar ability. It also allows for each player to experience playing with a wide variety of teammates of different skill levels.
 - A tryout-based program will balance teams by skill levels. Teams will be picked by the AYSO ALLIANCE Team Coaches. How the teams perform within the non-AYSO gaming circuit will be the only true form of balancing, i.e., divisional success based on participating with players of a similar level playing in the same division.

OPEN REGISTRATION Our program is open to all children who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

- If you want to play soccer, AYSO welcomes you and gives all youth and adults the opportunity to register and play.
 - Alliance is a tryout-based program and all eligible players (as defined below) will be given proper notice and opportunity to try out for an AYSO ALLIANCE team.

POSITIVE COACHING Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

- A coach can be one of the most influential people in a player's life, so AYSO requires they create a positive experience for every player in AYSO. Additionally, encouraging players' effort leads to greater enjoyment, improved skills and stronger motivation in players.

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our programs are designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

- AYSO ALLIANCE Coaches, Players, and Volunteers/Parents will be representing AYSO in a competitive venue; consequently, the program expects and will enforce a high standard of conduct and behaviors for all participants.

If multiple teams exist within an ALLIANCE for the same age/gender:

- There may be multiple teams in certain age groups and this may include "A/B/C" team formations, which could be labeled ALLIANCE Blue, Red or White. Each coach will pick

the best team they can. How the teams perform and ultimately, the level at which they play, will depend on the talent of the players and the coaching they receive.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT We believe that all players should be able to develop their soccer skills and knowledge to the best of their abilities, both individually and as members of a team, in order to maximize their enjoyment of the game.

- The AYSO ALLIANCE program gives players a chance to develop their soccer skills through competitive play under the direction of some of our most experienced and best-trained coaches. Players are given the platform to maximize their development and potential *within* AYSO.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

The following guidelines shall be used to determine player eligibility:

- Players selected *should* be registered prior to tryouts through sign up on the Region or Area AYSO website for the ALLIANCE program. Players not registered with an AYSO Region prior to the tryout will register at the tryouts site and a parent or legal guardian for each player will be required to sign an Emergency Authorization, Disclaimer, Assumption of Risk and Waiver, and the Acknowledgement and Consent Agreement form at tryouts or prior (see Appendix A). It is permissible host Areas and/or Region's may charge a nominal fee to cover tryout expenses.
- All players must be nine years old by December 31st of the upcoming season to be eligible to participate in this program.
- Once a player is old enough to play in AYSO ALLIANCE a player may play up one year with consent of parents and coaches (i.e., a 12U player may play on a 13U team). A Coach wanting a player to play up multiple years must get the permission of the Area ALLIANCE Director and the parents of the player. This may also be subject to State association limitations that will take precedence.
- Age classifications for ALLIANCE teams shall be for single age groups from 10U through 19U inclusively.
- Dual participation with another soccer league other than AYSO ALLIANCE is not permitted.
- Only players who attended open tryouts may be selected for placement on an ALLIANCE team
- Guest players may be used in alignment with state assn., gaming circuits and tournament rules.

PLAYER REGISTRATION

- Each ALLIANCE program shall utilize the AYSO registration system of record and the ALLIANCE program(s) for their ALLIANCE players. Players can both dual register at the Regional level and the ALLIANCE level. • The player will be responsible for paying all associated fees for the ALLIANCE program. • AYSO Region or Area ALLIANCE Director or ALLIANCE Registrar (if applicable) is responsible for assigning the players to the correct teams through the registration system.
- After the player is verified to have an AYSO registration, the player must become dual registered with the appropriate State Association or playing circuit by working with the AYSO ALLIANCE Director or State Association registrar.
 - o Player Cards will be produced from the State Association registration.
 - o The State Association registration form will be the players Medical Release form.
 - o Concussion Awareness and/or any additional forms required by AYSO or State Assn.

TEAM LIMITS

- In alignment with US Soccer standards and AYSO Philosophies, AYSO ALLIANCE teams are limited to a maximum roster on game day of:
 - o 12 players for 10U (Playing 7v7)
 - o 16 players for 11U (Playing 9v9)
 - o 16 players for 12U (Playing 9v9)
 - o 18 players for 12U-14U (Playing 11v11)

- o 18 players for 15U-19U (Playing 11v11)
- ALLIANCE may NOT create too many teams in a single division, where that would negatively impact the region's Core program. The standard for compliance is roughly 25% of the players in a two-year age group.

AYSO ALLIANCE Teams MUST have one head coach and one assistant coach (a team manager is also highly recommended). Two additional assistant coaches may be added to the coaching staff at the discretion of the head coach. All coaching staff must be AYSO registered volunteers with proper certifications.

Rosters may be further limited by small-sided game rules. Roster size should take into consideration the requirement to achieve the one-half game play per player per game (Everyone Plays).

Notes for high school players:

- Teams at the 14U division may add additional player(s) if they have a player (s) who will also be playing for their high school.
- 15U-19U teams may have up to 22 players on the roster if they have a player (s) who will also be playing for their high school. However, they will only be able to “suit” up to 18 players in a game and will have to abide by all playing circuits, tournament restrictions and or any High School association requirements.

COACH SELECTION

- Openings for Head Coaching positions within the AYSO ALLIANCE program must be advertised each year and applications submitted to the AYSO ALLIANCE Director as well as Area and Region administrators.
- Coaches must have the required State licensing and AYSO Area Requirements. (Equivalent AYSO Certifications are preferred).

Trainers and Contracts

- It is encouraged that all ALLIANCE coaches strive to develop a year-round coaching program for their ALLIANCE teams; however, supplemental training programs may be offered.
- AYSO has existing agreements with many trainer/camp providers. Please contact the AYSO Office for the current list.
- Should an Alliance program desire to utilize a different organization, the provider must complete the AYSO “Paid Services Agreement” which are signed by the AYSO Executive Director.
- Any Trainer agreements/contracts must be approved by the AYSO ALLIANCE Director, and the AYSO Office. All requirements (work permits, insurance, and qualifications) fall in line with AYSO National standards. The AYSO Office will perform regular vendor checks to ensure compliance with National standards.
- Agreement template and process can be found on AYSOVOLUNTEERS.ORG

Coaches (head and assistant) MUST:

- Adhere to the AYSO Vision, Mission, and AYSO Philosophies, in particular, **Positive Coaching, Good Sportsmanship, and Player Development**. Have the AYSO basic coaching registration criteria (expected of all AYSO volunteers).
- Take the online Safe Haven (Child and Volunteer Protection) Course (after 2019). • Complete CDC Heads Up Concussion Training through the official AYSO training program of record.
- Fill out a Volunteer form with e-signature online at local ALLIANCE registration portal annually. • Coaches are required to take SafeSport training and meet all other AYSO volunteer requirements.

- Have and maintain a current State Association Risk Management Disclosure, or applicable equivalent as requested by the State association. This will ensure that coaches can get State Association Coaches Cards and be allowed to be on the sidelines during games and tournaments. Failure to complete this prior to the first competitive game will result in suspension from coaching until all requirements are complete.

Coach Training Level

- Coaches must be licensed to the requirements of their state associations or applicable gaming circuit. Additionally, pending AYSO Area or Section standards and requirements, each head coach and assistant coach may require AYSO certification at the age level that they are working with:
 - 12U AYSO U12 Coach Certificate
 - 13U and 14U AYSO Intermediate Coach Certificate
 - 15U-19U AYSO Advanced Coach Certificate.

All certification requirements relate to the most recent National Coaching Program course:

- 10U and 12U must have completed the course *after* January 2013
Intermediate must have completed the course *after* January 2015
Advanced must have completed the course *after* January 2018
- Contact the local Section Coach Administrator for any coaches requiring U.S. Soccer equivalency or United Soccer Coaches reciprocity.

These requirements do not apply to tryouts for the AYSO ALLIANCE Team.

HEAD COACH'S RESPONSIBILITY

- The team's head coach is ultimately responsible for all team activities and is directly accountable to their AYSO ALLIANCE Director. However, a Head Coach can assign duties to others within his team's management and structure.

The team's head coach will be responsible for:

- Training times, place, and games (including scrimmages).
- Timely communication with all team parents.
- Tournament play, organize transportation, and lodging .
- Disciplinary action, as needed.
- Proper and required paperwork.
- Ensuring that EACH PLAYER WILL play a minimum of one-half of each game (injuries and disciplinary action exempt).
- Ensuring AYSO volunteer to player ratio is adhered to at all times.
- All coaches will dress in a professional manner (AYSO ALLIANCE branded apparel) at all matches, training sessions, and other AYSO ALLIANCE-related events.

TEAM OPERATIONS

Training Sessions:

- Training fields/times will be coordinated through host Regions' Field Scheduler. Pending level of play and in conjunction with AYSO ALLIANCE player development guidelines, each team will be allowed 3 to 6 hours of training per week not to exceed 120 minutes in length per session.
- Scrimmages (especially with other AYSO entities) are recommended and encouraged (however, these should be considered in the team's allocated training time).
- Other voluntary soccer related activities – such as additional soccer training, free-play or summer camps – do not count as practice time. However, an adequate off season and recovery period for all age groups is strongly recommended.

Tournaments:

- At the beginning of the soccer year (or each season), the coach should map out which tournaments the team wishes to participate in based on parent input, available funds and team objectives. The number and timing of tournaments should be considered by the coach in overall team planning (periodization) to ensure adequate rest and recovery.
- The coach or team manager should get the application for the tournament in PRIOR to the due date and consider if needed, block hotels, etc.
- For consistency, when signing up for a tournament, please use: AYSO ALLIANCE, Gender, Age Group and Coach last name, i.e., AYSO ALLIANCE, 05G, Barrett.

Guest players are permitted to play on the AYSO ALLIANCE team:

- For “ALLIANCE” players - the AYSO ALLIANCE Coach must get the player ID and applicable paperwork from the coach of the guest player’s team. Then, the coach must fill out and print the Guest form on the state association website.
- If the guest player is on an AYSO Primary Program team, the AYSO ALLIANCE coach must notify the AYSO ALLIANCE Director, and must register the player with the State Association. The AYSO ALLIANCE Registrar along with the registration form and then fill out and print the GUEST form on the state association website.
- The Team or parent will be responsible for any state league registration fees.

As long as a State association permits, an AYSO ALLIANCE player can play as a Guest player for another team (AYSO ALLIANCE team or another ALLIANCE). The player’s ALLIANCE Coach must supply the coach of the other team with his player’s player card. Nothing else is required. The coach of the team wanting the player should come to the AYSO ALLIANCE Coach. Exception: If the ALLIANCE team is playing in that tournament, most tournaments do not allow a guest (ALLIANCE) player to play for another team in the tournament.

NOTE: AYSO ALLIANCE guest players (of the same age group) are only allowed for regular season and tournament play *if* playing circuit permits.

FEES

- A. ALLIANCE fees will be established by the local Area and Region and may vary from Area to Area. These fees *can* include ALLIANCE fees, state association player fee, state association team fee, AYSO player fee and possibly referee fees.
- B. Teams **MUST** fund themselves.
- C. Fundraising:
- D. Appropriate AYSO fundraisers should be worked through the host ALLIANCE and approved by the AYSO ALLIANCE Director (in conjunction with Area Director).
- E. Payment can be made by parents without participation in fundraising.
- F. Donations are allowed from the player’s family, individuals, or businesses. A player’s family may elect to donate funds to the team; but a coach **cannot** require families to donate. E. Players or Teams that leave the ALLIANCE program will forfeit their account funds to the remaining ALLIANCE program teams and will not be entitled to any refund.
- G. ALLIANCE expenses should be reviewed and approved by the ALLIANCE Director as well as the Area Director and cut out of the Region or Area’s account, i.e., field rentals, tournament fees, etc.

FINANCIAL MATTERS and COMPLIANCE

- A. All AYSO ALLIANCE programs must use the AYSO accounting program of record, and must adhere to the financial policies and procedures described in the Treasurer’s Manual.
- B. All AYSO ALLIANCE Programs shall utilize the existing Region/Area or Section bank account established. All monies from the program must be deposited into the existing account in a

- timely manner. If the account does not exist, please contact the AYSO Financial Services team.
- C. An annual budget shall be prepared for each AYSO ALLIANCE Program to provide a basis for setting player membership and program fees and submitted to the AYSO Area or Section with the oversight responsibility for the ALLIANCE program.
 - D. All AYSO ALLIANCE Programs must ensure the financial integrity of the Organization by complying with the obligations established by Bylaw 1.04(l) and (m), including, the timely
 - E. payment of all national player registration fees prior to the commencement of the season and, as applicable throughout the season, in accordance with the registration requirements and procedures of the Organization.
 - F. Any suspected financial irregularity/fraud or misuse of funds must be immediately reported to the Area Director, Section Director and Finance Department of the AYSO Office.
 - G. AYSO ALLIANCE financial records shall be maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP.)
 - H. Agreements and contracts for facilities, services, etc. are to be approved and processed as required by AYSO governing documents.
 - I. Fundraising in various states may trigger the obligation to pay sales or other various taxes. Whenever fundraising is considered, the AYSO Office must be contacted to determine if a tax applies.
 - J. Tournaments must be self-sustaining if operated by the local ALLIANCE. Tournaments must be sanctioned by the appropriate tournament contact within the Section.
 - K. Please consult the AYSO Treasurer Manual for a discussion of additional requirements and “Best Practices” for the following:
 - cash handling protocols;
 - submission of monthly financial reports;
 - coding of income and expenses;
 - audits of finances conducted by National;
 - reconciliation of registered players to player registration fees received;
 - refund policies;
 - requirements of auditors;
 - volunteer reimbursement;
 - attendance at Nationally supported Section events,
 - AYSO Supply Center purchases; and
 - Other similar subjects.

(See Bylaw 1.04(l) and (m), together with the AYSO Treasurer Manual and the Treasurer's Position Description contained in the Reference Book, Chapter 15.)

TEAM DISCIPLINE

- Each ALLIANCE team (players, coaches, volunteers, parents) participating in any external gaming circuit should adhere to the highest behavioral standards and accept the responsibility of representing the entire organization.
- Coaches should go over his/her expectations of the players and parents/guardians and share their expectations of themselves in the first team meeting after the team has been chosen, including the AYSO Vision, Mission, and Philosophies.
- Going over that information PRIOR to the start of the season will help avoid the need of having to invoke any of the following Team Discipline.
- Parents will also sign the player parent agreement provided by the local ALLIANCE program. A player may be suspended from playing in a game OR removed from an AYSO ALLIANCE team if:
 - o The player’s behavior presents a significant conduct and discipline problem and is disruptive to the team.
 - o The player fails to show a good faith effort to attend scheduled team practices, games, or otherwise participate in soccer related activities.

- The action of any player's parent who attempts to undermine the discipline of the team and/or the coach's control of the team.
- The action of any player's parent(s) whose sideline behavior disrupts play, is considered abusive or unacceptable to the officials.

Suspension

- The Head Coach must document, in writing, and submit to the AYSO ALLIANCE Director the rationale for taking the disciplinary action. It must be demonstrated how the player's behavior is presenting a significant conduct and discipline problem. Or, in the case of missing team training sessions, must have documented proof that the player has missed OVER half of the scheduled training sessions (minimally – three weeks of normally scheduled training sessions must have passed).
- After reviewing the documentation provided, the Head Coach must meet with the AYSO ALLIANCE Director to verify all possible remedies have been exhausted. If, after the meeting, the AYSO ALLIANCE Director and the team's Head Coach agree, the player may be suspended from the team for a game.

Removal from Team

- The Head Coach must document, in writing, and submit to the AYSO ALLIANCE Director the rationale for taking disciplinary action. All AYSO policies and procedures for Dispute Resolution and Due Process shall apply.
- If there is a consensus, the parents (and player) will then be invited in to hear the concerns, and be allowed to respond. If the AYSO ALLIANCE Director agrees, the player may be removed from the AYSO ALLIANCE team. If the commitment is simply too much for a player/family and there have been no other disciplinary issues, the player should be offered placement on a regular Primary season team (if available).

Obviously, ALL efforts should be made in order to work out the issue involved, and this is and should always be a last resort.

Player Misconduct Reporting and Sanctions

- It is expected that players in the AYSO ALLIANCE program will hold **Good Sportsmanship** in high regard.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated by AYSO ALLIANCE players. • AYSO ALLIANCE Directors retain the right to discipline a player or coach above those sanctions set by the local State Association or gaming circuit.
- AYSO ALLIANCE Director retains the right to remove any approved coach from any AYSO ALLIANCE Team.

POACHING

- The State Association or playing circuit rules on player recruitment or "poaching" will be in effect. • There will be no signing players from the primary program until *all* the games are completed in regular season and the primary season is complete.

AYSO NOTES

- There must be a coach, assistant coach or team chaperone of the same sex as the players at *ALL* team activities.
- The chaperone ratio should be 8 to 1 on any out of town tournaments or events.
- Safe Haven/CVPA guidelines apply to AYSO ALLIANCE teams at all times.
- All AYSO policies and procedures for Dispute Resolution and Due Process shall apply to all coaches and volunteers within the AYSO ALLIANCE program.

STATE ASSOCIATION NOTES (Subject to local authority)

- AYSO cannot control or direct external gaming circuit decision-making or operational guidelines or standards.
- Your team schedule (for regular season games) will be on the State Association website or league of play website.
- Games times and locations sometimes CHANGE... please review the schedule weekly. • All teams will be required to abide by all State Association rules and guidelines, i.e., free substitutions.
- PLEASE direct all questions/comments/etc., related to the State Association or applicable gaming circuit through the Region or Area ALLIANCE Director.

PRIMARY PROGRAM GIVEBACK

It is understood that all volunteers (coaches, players and parents) participating in the ALLIANCE program are expected to contribute “back” to the local Primary Program. Suggestions include but are not limited to:

- Coach education and certification.
- Referee Program participation.
- Tournament support.
- EPIC program support.
- General volunteer support.
- Other areas if needed as determined by the ALLIANCE program.

Specifics will be coordinated by the Area Director in conjunction with participating region(s).

AYSO ALLIANCE BRANDING

- In addition to the AYSO Traditional logo, which should be placed on the left sleeve, approved AYSO ALLIANCE programs are required to use the AYSO ALLIANCE Crest on the left chest.
- Authorized ALLIANCE programs should apply their local relevant color scheme to the logo. Up to two colors are accommodated. The gray crest interior border should be the only color that remains intact. (Examples shown below.)
- The AYSO Office will be responsible for creating official repro art, using color input from the local program.
- Please note, due to trademark laws, red, white and navy versions as per AYSO United will need to be approved by the AYSO Office.

