



AYSO ALLIANCE PROGRAM OPERATIONS

DEFINITION

The purpose of the AYSO ALLIANCE program is to support AYSO player development to the highest levels of play. It is an integral part of the AYSO competitive play program and can provide potential progression to AYSO United. To align with the AYSO player pathway, EXTRA should be utilized first, where an EXTRA program is viable. The Alliance program is primarily intended to be a volunteer run program but allows 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 Section, 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 Section, 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:

- Complete an AYSO ALLIANCE Application to request approval.
- 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.
- Be based in geographical Areas where there is sufficient field space, demand for club soccer and availability of a club gaming circuit.
- Agree to all prescribed standards and expectations to ensure quality programming and authentic 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 and will bear the AYSO ALLIANCE logo on the chest. Uniform colors in each Area/Section may differ from program to program.

PROGRAM SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION

- An ALLIANCE program may be suspended with a majority vote of the Section, Area or Region Board.
- 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 should include a treasurer and a registrar.

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

In situations where there are multiple Areas/Regions within a Section that are participating in the same State Association with an ALLIANCE program, the appropriate Section Director will appoint a Director/President. The Section, Area or Region ALLIANCE Director may not be Executive Member of AYSO. The ALLIANCE Director may report to a State Association president, if in high volume markets (Southern California, etc.).



- Be the point-of-contact and President of AYSO ALLIANCE within the club soccer affiliate.
- Develop an ALLIANCE operating budget.
- Attend all Section and and/or Area meetings within their Section.
- Attend all State Association meetings and other external league meetings, as required.
- As required, review ALLIANCE Operating Procedures to provide feedback to Section Director
- Work to support Regions to promote ALLIANCE.
- May be a voting member of the program at the State association or league, where applicable.
- The Section Director has the authority to remove an ALLIANCE President from a program within their Section.

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 AYSO's 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, tournaments 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

- 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.

- AYSO ALLIANCE gives all youth the opportunity to register and play.
 - o 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 them to 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 these teams should be balanced as best as possible.

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 players' eligibility:

- Players selected should be registered prior to tryouts through signing up on the Region or Area AYSO website for the ALLIANCE program. Players not registered with an AYSO Region/Area prior to the tryout will register at the tryouts site and a parent or legal guardian for each player will be required to all required waivers and agreements. 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 1st 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 Section or 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.

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 Region level and the ALLIANCE level.
- The player will be responsible for paying all additional associated fees for the ALLIANCE program.
- AYSO Region or Area Section 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 or league 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 14 players for 10U (Playing 7v7)
 - o 18 players for 11U (Playing 9v9)
 - o 18 players for 12U (Playing 9v9)
 - o 22 players for 12U-14U (Playing 11v11)
 - o 22 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). All coaching staff must be registered AYSO volunteers with proper certifications and compliance requirements and must also have the appropriate US Soccer coaching license, where necessary.

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 requirements.

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 an outside provider, the provider must have been approved by the AYSO Executive Director.



- 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.

Coaches (head and assistant) MUST:

- Adhere to the AYSO Vision, Mission, and AYSO Philosophies, in particular, Positive Coaching, Good Sportsmanship, and Player Development.
- Fill out a Volunteer form with e-signature online in the local Region registration portal annually.
- Meet all other AYSO volunteer requirements.
- Satisfy all current State Association Risk Management requirements, as set forward by the State Association. This will ensure that coaches can get State Association coach cards and be allowed to be on the sidelines during games and tournaments.

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 be required to hold AYSO certification at the age level that they are working with:
 - 9U and 10U: AYSO 10U Coach Certificate
 - 11U and 12U: AYSO 12U 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. Contact the local Section Coach Administrator for any coaches requiring U.S. Soccer equivalency reciprocity.

These requirements do not apply to running 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.



The team's head coach will be responsible for:

- Following AYSO's Six Philosophies and representing AYSO, AYSO ALLIANCE, and the Region/Area/Section in a positive manner.
- Timely communication with all team parents.
- Tournament play, transportation, and lodging, where required).
- Disciplinary action, as needed.
- Completing and maintaining all required paperwork.
- Ensuring that each player plays a minimum of one-half of each game (with allowances for injuries and disciplinary action).
- Ensuring the AYSO volunteer to player ratio is adhered to at all times.
- All coaches will dress in a professional manner at all matches, training sessions, and other AYSO ALLIANCE-related events.

DISCIPLINE

- AYSO ALLIANCE Directors retain the right to discipline 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.

TEAM OPERATIONS

Training Sessions:

- Training fields/times will be coordinated at the Region level along with all Core programming.
- 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:

- There is no limit on the number of tournaments a team may enter. The number and timing of tournaments should be considered by the coach in overall team planning(periodization) to ensure adequate rest and recovery.
- The ALLIANCE team will be responsible for any tournament registration fees.
- At the beginning of the soccer year (or each season), the coach should identify which tournaments the team wishes to participate in based on parent input, available funds and team objectives.
- 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, it is recommended teams use the following format: AYSO ALLIANCE Region #, Gender, Age Group and Coach last name, i.e., “Section 1 ALLIANCE Region 113, 12G, Johnson”.
- Guest players are permitted to play on AYSO ALLIANCE teams in alignment with State Association, gaming circuits and tournament rules. Guest players are not permitted to be permanent members of an Alliance team.
- Where allowed, an AYSO ALLIANCE player can play as a Guest player for another AYSO ALLIANCE team. The player’s ALLIANCE Coach must supply the coach of the other team with his player’s player card.

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 at any out-of-town tournaments or events.
- All AYSO compliance guidelines always apply to AYSO ALLIANCE teams.



- 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.
- All teams will be required to abide by all State Association rules and guidelines, i.e., free substitutions.

FEES

- 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 referee fees. It is recommended a deposit is paid to the Section or Area that will cover any fines incurred by the team during the season. This deposit is refundable at the completion of the competition period.
- Teams MUST fund themselves.
- Fundraising:
 - Appropriate AYSO fundraisers should be worked through the host ALLIANCE team and approved by the Section or Area ALLIANCE Director (in conjunction with the Area Director or Regional Commissioner).
 - Payment can be made by parents without participation in fundraising.
 - 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.
- 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.
- ALLIANCE expenses should be reviewed and approved by the ALLIANCE Director as well as the Area Director and payments must be made out of the Region or Area's account, i.e., field rentals, tournament fees, etc.



FINANCIAL MATTERS AND COMPLIANCE

- All AYSO ALLIANCE programs must use the AYSO accounting program of record and must adhere to the financial policies and procedures required by AYSO.
- All AYSO ALLIANCE Programs shall utilize the existing Section/Area or Region bank account. All monies from the program must be deposited into the existing account in a timely manner.
- 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 Section or Area with the oversight responsibility for the ALLIANCE program.
- 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 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.
- Any suspected financial irregularity/fraud or misuse of funds must be immediately reported to the Section Director, Area Director and Finance Department of the AYSO Office.
- AYSO ALLIANCE financial records shall be maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- Agreements and contracts for facilities, services, etc. are to be approved and processed as required by AYSO governing documents.
- Fundraising in various states may trigger the obligation to pay sales or other various taxes. Whenever fundraising is considered, the AYSO Office should be contacted to determine if a tax applies.
- If operated by the ALLIANCE program, tournaments must be self-sustaining. Tournaments must be sanctioned by the Section or Area board.
- All AYSO policies on the following must be met:
 - cash handling protocols;
 - submission of monthly financial reports;
 - coding of income and expenses;



- audits of finances conducted by the AYSO Office;
- reconciliation of registered players to player registration fees received;
- refund policies;
- requirements of auditors;
- volunteer reimbursement;
- 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. For additional questions, contact Finance@AYSO.org)

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 overview behavioral guidelines for players and parents/guardians and share their expectations of following the AYSO Vision, Mission, and Six Philosophies. It is recommended this takes place at a team meeting before each season.
- It is also recommended that parents also sign the player parent agreement provided by the ALLIANCE program.
- Going over all information PRIOR to the start of the season will help avoid the need to invoke any of the following Team Discipline.

A player may be suspended from playing in a game OR removed from an AYSO ALLIANCE team if:

- The player's behavior presents a significant conduct and discipline problem and is disruptive to the team.
- 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 family attempts to undermine the discipline of the team and/or the coach's control of the team.
- The action of any player's family sideline behavior disrupts play, is considered abusive or considered 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 presents 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 family (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 to work out the issue involved, and suspension or removal should always be a last resort.



Player Misconduct and Sanctions

- It is expected that players in the AYSO ALLIANCE program will hold Good Sportsmanship in high regard.
- Unsporting behavior will not be tolerated by AYSO ALLIANCE players and may result in sanctions from the State Association or ALLIANCE program.
- AYSO ALLIANCE Directors retain the right to discipline a player above those sanctions set by the local State Association or gaming circuit.

POACHING

- State Association or playing circuit rules on player recruitment or “poaching” will be in effect.
- Signing players from the primary program is not allowed until all the games are completed in regular season and the primary season is complete.
- All questions/comments/etc. related to the State Association or applicable gaming circuit must **be made only** through the Section, Area or Region 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).