

Western New York Christian Athletic Association

WNYCAA 2014 (Official)

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PART I - Introduction

The Western New York Christian Athletic Association (WNYCAA) is a Christian organization which organizes competitive youth soccer tournaments and events based upon the principles of Godly integrity, honor and fair play.

Though WNYCAA may, at its discretion, allow teams to participate which are not specifically "Christian", it is our conviction that all players, coaches and spectators in a Christian organization should inherently be held to a high standard of sportsmanship and conduct at all times, even when participating in competitive sporting events.

Though we recognize that not all WNYCAA participants are going to hold the same values, nor demonstrate equal levels of maturity, the fact remains our character, and the values we hold dear, are on display for the world to see.

Therefore, it should be evident to all that proper conduct and our respect for one another and the rules of the game are more important to us than the outcome of any game. Therefore, all persons associated with a WNYCAA event will be expected to uphold the Christian standards of the organization (as set forth in WNYCAA's collective documents) and teach and exhibit appropriate behavior during all aspects of competition.

It is expected that coaches will instruct and enforce good sportsmanship while assertively correcting inappropriate behaviors such as taunting, cheating, commission of "professional fouls", and/or showing dissension toward the authority of the referees or coaches. All participants in WNYCAA activities shall demonstrate that athletic excellence can truly be achieved without cheating, breaking the rules, or disparaging our opponents or players.

With this in mind, WNYCAA policies and documents have been established to:

- 1) Help raise the level of skill and sportsmanship exhibited in games,
- 2) Increase the value of participation,
- 3) Minimize any potential misunderstandings,
- 4) Maintain an acceptable level of integrity as a Christian organization,
- 5) Provide structure, guidance and consistency.

PART II - Sportsmanship Statement

The Western NY Christian Athletic Association requires officials and coaches to enforce all sportsmanship rules for spectators, athletes and coaches. We will not tolerate negative statements nor actions which may jeopardize the integrity of the game and/or the safety of it's participants. Let every contest reflect mutual respect.

PART III - List of Forms (available on the website)

- A - Application (for new teams) (to President)
- B - WNYCAA Player Registration Form (to Team)
- C - WNYCAA Team Registration Form (& Roster) (to Registrar)
- D - Field Diagram

PART IV - Organization:

A - **Divisions:** WNYCAA competition will be grouped as needed based on geography, skill level and/or gender.

1) Gender

- a) All-Boys Division
- b) All-Girls Division
- c) Co-Ed Division (not currently active)

2) Geography

- a) North / West Division (not currently active)
- b) South / East Division (not currently active)

3) An A - B League based on anticipated team skill level.

B - **Board Of Directors :** The WNYCAA Board Of Directors shall consist of the Administrator plus a Divisional Rep for each existing Division.

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- 1) Setting WNYCAA policy and distributing documents
- 2) Enforcing WNYCAA rules and resolving issues
- 3) Establishing WNYCAA budget (in conjunction with the Treasurer)
- 4) Communicating with participants and referee assignors concerning policy and issues.
- 5) Coordinating WNYCAA schedules.
- 6) Coordinating WNYCAA meetings
- 7) Overseeing the WNYCAA website
- 8) Establishing the formats of early season and late season play.

C - **Support Staff** shall potentially consist of:

1) Treasurer :

- a) Responsible for the collection, deposit, and distribution of funds related to WNYCAA expenses .
- b) Produce financial reports to be submitted at the coaches' meetings and other times requested by the Board.
- c) This function should ideally be conducted by someone other than a member of the Board.

2) Secretary :

- a) Responsible for taking minutes at the meetings and for disseminating these minutes to the Board for review.
- b) Shall assist the Board with additional communications pertaining to WNYCAA as requested.
- c) This function may be combined with any other positions.

3) Registrar :

- a) Responsible for collecting team agreement forms, official team rosters, overseeing posting of official team rosters, receiving misconduct notices, and reporting ineligible player status to the division coaches and Board.
- b) This function may be combined with any other positions.

4) Webmaster :

- a) Responsible for posting schedules, rosters, news and game results, etc. on the web site.
- b) This function may be combined with any other positions.

D - All Board of Directors positions and Support Staff are nominated and voted annually by one representative from each of the current participating orgs/teams at the Spring coaches meeting (or other pre-established time if needed).

PART V - Teams, Coaches, Players, Referees

A - Team Eligibility & Responsibilities

- 1) New teams shall apply for participation to WNYCAA by submitting **Form "A"** to the Administrator prior to June 1st.
- 2) New teams requesting to participate in WNYCAA events, must first obtain approval by the Board of Directors.
- 3) Each organization shall send at least one administrative representative to attend **WNYCAA meetings**.
- 4) Each team shall collect an approved WNYCAA Registration **Form "B"** from each player, and verify the player's age and parental signature via government issued ID or Birth Certificate before being added to the team roster.
- 5) Each team shall have a "talking points" **pre-season meeting** with players and parents, and/or hand out printed material to their families outlining expectations of WNYCAA before the season starts.
- 6) Each team shall meet the **medical readiness requirements** of Part VI.
- 7) Each home team shall designate a **Field Supervisor** to monitor the spectator side of the field during games and ensure that the fans behave in a proper manner. The Field Supervisor has the authority to have persons removed.
- 8) Each team shall appoint a person who is responsible for filing a **game report** for each official game within 12hrs.
- 9) Each team shall submit the following to the Registrar no less than one week prior to the first official game:
 - a) Annual Administrative Fees - as set by the Board of Directors
 - b) Team Agreement / Roster - All teams shall provide initial roster data and agree to WNYCAA rules and guidelines by signing and submitting **Form "C"**.

B - Coaches' Responsibilities:

- 1) Coaches shall endeavor to set an environment where everyone involved exhibits respect, restraint and courtesy to players, coaches, referees and fans.
- 2) Coaches shall ensure the team has a "talking points" pre-season meeting as described in Part V - A above.
- 3) Coaches shall remove players from the game who are disrespectful to players, coaches, referees or the fans.
- 4) Coaches shall cooperate with the Referees and/or Field Supervisor if a delay is necessary to ensure fans behave in a sportsmanship like manner, and/or to address an issue on the field. (See also Part VII - C and VIII - D (7))
- 5) During a game, coaches and captains may respectfully question the application or interpretation of a rule, but should avoid publicly criticizing the judgment or decisions of a referee. If there is a question or concern about the performance of a referee, the coach shall provide written details to the Board in the game report.
- 6) Coaches shall not allow a player to participate in a tournament match who is not eligible. (See Players Part V - D)
- 7) Coaches shall have printed team rosters available at every contest matching the official roster on the web site. The printed roster shall be given to the referees and/or the opposing team upon request. **The roster shall include all non-player staff (max 4) and their role(s), the name of all the players, their age on June 30, and their current jersey number. (Jersey changes may be made at game time by first notifying the opponents and the officials.)**

C - Referees

- 1) Home teams shall use a referee assignor who is NYSCOS (NFHS) certified to assign two referees for all WNYCAA games. **The referees assigned must be familiar with NFHS rules and the ways in which NFHS might differ from other ruling organizations (such as USSF).** They should have no personal connection to either team.
- 2) The Board recognizes item #1 may not always be possible. However, it should be the norm.
- 3) **Home teams should contact the referee(s) and other team 24 hours in advance to confirm the next game.** Home teams must call the referees or assignor immediately concerning any cancellation issues. (See Part VII - A)
- 4) Home teams shall pay the referees once they arrive, even if the game is cancelled, forfeit or suspended. The league will assist home teams in sorting out fair payment if the away team or assignor was at fault.
- 5) If only one referee will be assigned to a WNYCAA game, each team should supply a competent linesperson, unless requested not to do so by the head referee. (See Part VII - F2 and G4)
- 6) If the referee(s) assigned to the game do not show, a **qualified** substitute may be used if mutually agreed upon by both coaches. (However, no coaches nor students should referee WNYCAA games, except as a last resort.)
- 7) If both coaches agree to #5 above, the game shall be played as an official game, and count in the standings. If the coaches do not agree, the points game shall be postponed (recommended procedure).
- 8) Referees have full authority on the field, and have permission of the WNYCAA to deal with players, coaches and fans according to NFHS rules and WNYCAA policy, including permission to eject any such persons from the game and/or field area, and/or terminate the game if necessary. (See also Part VIII - D (7))
- 9) If there is ever a question or concern about the performance of a referee, the coach(es) shall provide details to the Board and to the Referee Assignor asap following the game.
- 10) Likewise, Referees should report any concerns to the Board asap.

D - Player Eligibility and Rosters

- 1) Subject to #11 below, persons must be age **18 or under on June 30** of the current year to participate as a player in a WNYCAA Fall match. (ie: Persons who turn 19 prior to July 1 are not eligible to play.)
- 2) Subject to #11 below, persons must be at least **13 years of age** to participate as players in a WNYCAA Fall match. (However, subject to #11 below, a participating organization may also utilize **a few** players at least 12 years of age who have received a written statement of approval from an authorized physician to participate in varsity sports. A copy of the proof of approval shall be submitted to the Registrar before participation is allowed.)
- 3) No person who currently physically attends, nor has graduated from a public school is eligible.
- 4) No person who plays for a college or pro team is eligible.
- 5) No person living separate from a legal guardian is eligible. Therefore, no person living on a college campus is eligible. (However, this does not apply to residents who dorm on a participating private high school campus.)
- 6) Students enrolled in a private school may not play for any other WNYCAA team if the school hosts a team.
- 7) Effective one week after Labor Day, players must have had a minimum of 4 total practices with the team on or after Aug 1, and before the day of the match in which they participate. A "practice" shall be defined as participation in any of the team's formal practices, scrimmages or games (even if just sitting the bench). A player shall not participate in a WNYCAA league game until they have met this requirement. (See NOTE below.)
- 8) All new player information shall be sent to the Registrar at least 24 hours before they are to play in a WNYCAA league match. No player may participate unless listed on the official team roster on the web site.
- 9) **Rosters are finalized (locked in) immediately prior to playing any team in your division the second time. (2014)**
- 10) Participation in the WNYCAA shall be in accordance with all WNYCAA guidelines, rules, policies, and values. All participants and organizations shall agree to these terms automatically upon completing and submitting a WNYCAA registration form to their team's management and/or the WNYCAA Registrar. Therefore, all WNYCAA players and organizations must submit their registration forms prior to participation in any WNYCAA match.
- 11) **The WNYCAA Board holds ultimate authority as to any player or organization's eligibility concerning participation. Participation in the WNYCAA is a privilege, not a right.** The Board may withhold and/or withdraw eligibility at any time as per these guidelines, and/or in view of the overall vision and/or purpose of the WNYCAA. Examples: Player eligibility might be **withheld** (rejected) if, in the opinion of the Board, a player's participation is deemed to be potentially unsafe due to physical or emotional considerations that might create unacceptable high risks or disruptions, regardless of the opinion of any parent, organization or physician connected to the player. Furthermore, player eligibility may be **withdrawn** (suspended) by the Board immediately and indefinitely if the Board decides further participation is not in the best interest of the WNYCAA.

NOTE - In reference to eligibility item #7 above: running at home, or playing/practicing with someone other than the participating team, is **not** an acceptable substitute for a practice with the team. You must practice with the WNYCAA team to meet #7.

NOTE - As for conditioning, it is the desire of the WNYCAA that every player be fit to play for every game. However, we have no means of measuring nor enforcing that evenly across the league. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the teams/coaches to determine and ensure that their players are properly physically prepared to play for each game. How you accomplish that is up to you. All players should be working out at home to develop adequate fitness.

PART VI - Medical Readiness

- 1) It is strongly recommended that each team have a person formally trained in First Aid / CPR at all games and practices.
- 2) **Each team must have an adequately stocked First Aid kit available at every WNYCAA game including ice.**
- 3) Each team **must** have a person, other than the coach, designated to handle minor injuries of players during the games.
- 4) Each team **should** have special gear readily available to help remove injured players from the field (if prudent).
- 5) **Each home team must have local EMS contact info available at the field.** (Might not have 911)
- 6) **Each home team must have maps to the nearest hospitals immediately available** including a short description of the services they provide, the Emergency Room phone numbers, and the distances from your field.
- 7) Each home team **should** have someone willing to lead a visiting team family to the hospital from your home field (if requested).

PART VII - Games, Rules and Recommendations

A - Schedules

- 1) Teams should reserve Tuesday's and Thursday's for WNYCAA Games as a general rule.
- 2) The Game Schedule on the WNYCAA Website is the official League Schedule. Please check it frequently.
- 3) If a team wishes to make a schedule change, they should contact the opposing team and the League Admin at least two full days in advance and humbly request a change. They are not obligated to accommodate you.

B - General

- 1) All WNYCAA games will be played according to the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules, unless otherwise stated in official WNYCAA documents. (Notes: NFHS rules are what NYS Public High Schools use. NFHS rules, are NOT identical to the USSF / FIFA rules used in Spring leagues or pro teams.)
- 2) Prior to every game, coaches, referees and **entire teams (including staff) shall assemble for pre-game instructions**. The home team Coach shall read the WNYCAA Sportsmanship Statement. Captains shall then be asked to step out from the group for the coin toss while the teams and coaches are dismissed (if they wish).

C - Equipment and Fields

- 1) Coaches are responsible to ensure their players are properly equipped prior to start of play. (NFHS)
- 2) NOCSAE labeled shinguards are mandatory as per NFHS rules.
- 3) No metal cleats of any kind.
- 4) No jewelry, no wristbands (other than for perspiration), no hard or pointed objects in hair. (Players may only use sweatbands, rubber bands or scrunchies in hair.)
- 5) If two teams are dressed alike, it is the home teams' responsibility to change uniforms or wear pennies.
- 6) Goalkeepers should be in contrasting color from all other players and referees. Please have more than one color keeper jersey (or pennies) available.
- 7) Players may wear knit caps and/or gloves in cold weather. (Colors should match uniforms as much as possible.)
- 8) Unless waiver has been issued by the Board, all playing surfaces and goals shall meet the minimum NFHS design and dimensions, be properly marked, and safe to use. (Fields must be relatively level, smooth, & free of rocks, ruts, holes, debris or other hazards that compromise safety. Goals must be properly secured / anchored.
- 9) Referees have authority to delay the start or suspend the game until situations are corrected. (See D below.)

D - Game Times, Delays, Suspension of Play, and Injury Time Outs

- 1) All delayed starts, and/or lengthy suspensions of play, are to be reported to the Board.
- 2) Teams should arrive at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start of a game, and games shall start on time. If a team does not have enough players to actually begin the game by 30 minutes after the designated start time, the "stood up" team may claim a forfeit. (See section E below)
- 3) **WNYCAA Games will be two 40-minute halves with normal NFHS clock stoppages**, unless directed otherwise by the Board, or both coaches agree otherwise before starting either half (due to darkness, weather, etc).
- 4) **There is no overtime in the regular (early) season games.** (See separate policies for late season games.)
- 5) Games should be conducted using a designated time keeper and a clock visible to the benches when possible.
- 6) **If a game cannot be completed solely due to weather, the score at the time the game was suspended will stand.** However, any other cause for suspension or early termination will be handled by the Board. **(See Part IX)**
- 7) **All players who appear to have received an injury which visibly affects their emotions and/or play are to initially be removed to the sidelines as soon as possible by the referees / coaches, regardless of what the player or coach has to say, and the game shall continue if there are enough numbers. The injured players shall be inspected by the team designee and/or coach before being put back into the game.**
- 8) If a player is seriously injured such that removal from the field is not possible and/or hospitalization is likely, a game may rightfully be relocated, suspended and/or postponed out of concern for the player. (See 6 above)

E - Number of Players

- 1) All WNYCAA games are 11 v 11. (Teams may play short with as few as 8. Opponents not obligated to play down.)
- 2) Co-ed Division: The maximum number of boy players on the field shall be limited to nine. If a team has no girls, the team must play short. The opposing team is not obligated to play down.
- 3) If a team cannot field 8 for the beginning or remainder of the game, the WNYCAA game is forfeit. However, if teams wish to loan / borrow players in order to continue to play an unofficial game, they may do so.

F - Benches, Spectators and Photographers

- 1) Teams shall sit on the opposite side of the field from the fans. **No persons shall be on the same side as the teams unless they are designated on the game roster as a player, coach, assistant coach, manager, injury designee, or other specific role. (4 adults max) All such persons must remain in the team area. (NFHS rules)**
- 2) Other persons such as pre-approved ball handlers, or linesmen may be allowed on the team side if both teams are in agreement. (See also G below - "Balls, Ball Handlers and Linesmen") Such persons may not "coach" (G8).
- 3) **All spectators and teams must sit/stand at least 10 feet from the approved sidelines.** (NFHS) (A painted dashed line should be made at all fields wherever possible.) **Furthermore, no spectators shall be allowed to sit or linger along the endlines (goal lines).**
- 4) **Designated Photographers may roam the boundaries of the field, but may not "coach" players, nor enter nor linger near the opposing team's bench area, nor linger within the extended boundaries of any goalkeeper's box.**
- 5) Referees have Board permission to have coaches remove persons from the above areas at any time before or during games. Teams can also designate persons to keep spectators out of these areas (ie; Field Supervisor.)
- 6) No spectators shall enter or cross the field during the game, nor immediately following, until the referees have completely left the playing field.

G - Balls, Ball Handlers and Linesmen

- 1) At least **three basically matching, properly inflated, NCAA, IMS, FIFA or NFHS approved**, size 5 soccer balls must be supplied by the home team for referee inspection before each game.
- 2) Game balls shall be used at these locations: *Using 3 Balls* - one on each side and one in center, OR one at each end and one in the center. Balls should be retrieved and returned to these locations as soon as possible.
- 3) Balls may be simply placed on the ground at the above locations, or managed by DESIGNATED ball handlers.
- 4) Coaches must agree on the use of linesmen and/or ball handlers before the start of the game or at half time as per F(2) above. (See also Part V - C Referees)
- 5) All designated Ball Handlers and Linesmen MUST properly wear a colored scrimmage vest or other item that clearly distinguishes them from the other spectators, players and referees. (No team jerseys allowed!)
- 6) If there is only one Ball Handler per side, **they should NOT run up and down the sidelines.** They should wait at roughly midfield for the ball to go out, THEN run to that spot and deliver the spare ball as quickly as possible.
- 7) No adult ball handlers (older than 18) connected to team "A" shall operate along the same half and same side of the field containing team "B's" bench. (ie: There shall be no adults connected with the opposing team doing ball handling on the same half of the sideline occupied by your team's bench.)
- 8) **Neither linesmen nor ball handlers shall attempt to "coach" the teams during play.** Exception: Team Coaches who are also functioning as linesmen along the team's sideline.

H - Post Game Procedures

- 1) The "hand shake" shall occur immediately following the game. (No coaching until the hand shake is completed.)
- 2) All Coaches and Referees MUST supervise the hand shake. **Players are NOT to shake hands with referees.**
- 3) Teams should immediately leave the field together as a group as soon as possible following the game.
- 4) All parties should leave the vicinity of the playing field as soon as possible following a game.
- 5) Coaches and Referees are to report any misconduct or other concerns in connection with the game.

I - WNYCAA Standings

- 1). Home Teams should report final game scores to the WNYCAA website admin within 12 hours upon completion of their game. However, the Visiting Team may do so instead if they wish. The standings will automatically reflect:
 - a) 3 points for a win
 - b) 1 point for a tie
 - c) 0 points for a loss
- 2). The Season Standings and any Seedings for any late-season playoffs or tournaments, etc will be determined using the following steps in descending order as needed to establish each position when two or more teams are tied:
 - a) Most points earned in league play
 - b) Most points earned head-to-head
 - c) Best goal differential head-to-head (max plus or minus 3 per game)
 - d) Best goal differential league play (max plus or minus 3 per game)
 - e) Most wins in league play
 - f) Most shutouts in league play
 - g) Random selection method conducted by the Board.

PART VIII - Misconduct and Consequences

A - DEFINITIONS

- 1) In regard to this section, a "WNYCAA game" is defined as ANY early or late season Fall WNYCAA game in which points, standings, or titles are at stake within a given calendar year.
- 2) The phrase "in connection with a WNYCAA game" includes the entire time between the time that a team or individual arrives at the game site, and the time that they leave.
- 3) "Misconduct" is anything labeled as such in NFHS rules, or any other behavior contrary to the WNYCAA's standards in connection with a game that should be brought to the WNYCAA's attention. (eg: parking lot confrontations, heckling, instigation or participation in violent conduct, taunting, spitting at a person, or displays insulting, offensive, abusive language or gestures toward others in connection with a WNYCAA contest, delaying the game, etc.)

B - YELLOW and RED CARDS (players):

- 1) One yellow "caution" in any game = player must sub out. The player can then go back into the game as per NFHS rules after receiving the coach's correction and being subbed back in at the normal time.
- 2) Two yellow cards in the same game = one "hard red". The player will sit out the rest of the game and the team will play short. **Players are not required to actually leave the bench area unless their behavior is violent or disruptive.** (NFHS rules)
- 3) An accumulation of four total yellows during any part of the season (which did not otherwise already lead to a red card in the same game) = 1 "soft red". The player must sit out the remainder of the game. Team does **not** play short. However, the player is suspended for at least the next "WNYCAA game" (See D below). (WNYCAA policy).
- 4) If a red card is issued directly for any reason = one "hard red". The player will sit out the rest of the game and the team will play short. (NFHS rules) The player will also be suspended for the next "WNYCAA game". (See also D below) (WNYCAA policy)

C - REPORTING

- 1) All teams shall file a game report within 12 hours of completion of the game. **The details concerning issuance of any cards for either team, or any other improper conduct from anyone which occurred before, during or after the games is REQUIRED by both teams.**
- 2) The registrar will report by email the status of any player who is suspended, or who currently has accumulated 3 cautions (yellow cards) during the season, to all the applicable coaches of the Division who have an upcoming game with that team.
- 3) Before the game commences, the opposing coaches shall remind each other of any player's ineligibility.

D - SUSPENSIONS / LOSS OF ELIGIBILITY / SEND OFFS (EJECTIONS)

- 1) Participation in the WNYCAA is a privilege, not a right. The WNYCAA Board retains the final authority to determine any individual's eligibility based on criteria in the guidelines and/or inappropriate behavior.
- 2) A player receiving 2 red cards of any kind in a calendar year will automatically sit out for the next two WNYCAA games after receiving the second red card, and is ineligible for All-star selection if any. (WNYCAA policy)
- 3) A player receiving 3 red cards of any kind in a calendar year is automatically suspended for the remainder of the year. (WNYCAA policy)
- 4) At the discretion of the WNYCAA Board (as described below in #6), any player, coach or spectator who has clearly violated WNYCAA standards for conduct may be immediately suspended from competition and/or barred from attendance at WNYCAA matches until further review of the situation is conducted, regardless of whether any cards were issued during the game, or on any other previous occasion. Evidence of inappropriate behavior could include:
 - a) Film capturing the behavior.
 - b) Eye witness accounts from Board members present at the game.
 - c) Confirmation from the player's own team members or staff.
 - d) The issuance of cards, or post-game accounts from the referees.
 - e) The Board will NOT likely act on "he said - she said" reports alone, even though all reports are welcome.
- 5) Following Board review, a "caution" (yellow card) may be added to a player's total, the player may be declared ineligible for All-star selection, and/or the player may be suspended for any remaining portion of the season, regardless of any previous offenses the player may or may not have had. (WNYCAA policy)

- 6) Any member of the Board may make a motion for a specific action pertaining to violations of WNYCAA standards as per #4 and #5. The motion must be approved by at least 2/3 majority of the Board to be implemented.
- 7) If a person is ejected from the field area by an official, or has been instructed to leave the field by the Field Supervisor, or has already been barred from attending matches by the Board, but refuses to leave the area when a WNYCAA game is in progress, the **team officials, Field Supervisor and/or referees have the authority to have these persons removed from the field by police escort if necessary**. Otherwise, the game may be terminated by the officials and/or referees, and the Board will determine the outcome of the game as per Part IV(C)(4). However, please call the WNYCAA Administrator if possible before taking such action.

PART IX - Lightning Policy and Weather Considerations

WNYCAA policy is established to provide games that are reasonably safe, fair and fun. However, **it is the responsibility of the participants to respond appropriately** to weather related factors and other outside influences upon the games.

Teams must monitor weather forecasts before leaving home and either postpone the game, or make sure their players come prepared for whatever the conditions are possibly going to be. Don't assume your players will dress appropriately on their own! (Because they usually don't!!!!)

Extremely **Cold Weather, Hot Weather, High Winds, Water or Debris on the Fields** may be factors that affect the ability to safely conduct or continue a game.

The referee Boards may also have specific policies they must follow concerning **Thunder and Lightning**, and participants are obligated to accept and co-operate with those policies.

If any person in authority (referee, coach, or administrator) sees lightning or hears thunder, referees must stop the game, clear the players from the field, and suspend play until a continuous 30 minute period has passed with no NEW thunder or lightning. Each time a new instance occurs, the 30 minute clock starts all over.

Once the referee suspends the game, the responsibility for the teams rests solely with the coaches and parents. (The referees do not have authority over players during the suspension except for misconduct within the rules.) Players may initially go to the benches and retrieve personal items (if the coach allows it and it is prudent to do so), but coaches should then immediately relocate the players as soon as possible to a safer place, and/or release them to the authority of their parents. (common sense would dictate this.) After the required delays, the referees, along with the coaches, and/or site coordinator, will need to make a determination whether the game can or should be continued.

Because circumstances will differ widely from one storm to the next, one field to the next, one team to the next, one family to the next, and one player to the next, WNYCAA recommends each team/org/family develop their own plan of action for what they will do once a game is suspended. In any case, WNYCAA dictates the parents and coaches will assume full responsibility for their own players at those moments. (WNYCAA policy simply cannot cover every scenario.)

When and where a team decides to regather to warm up is at the discretion of the club / family. However, if a team is not able to warm up prior to the end of a required delay, teams shall be afforded no more than 10 minutes to warm up after the required waiting period if a coach makes such a request. The threat of darkness should always be considered in regards to how much warm up time is taken. (WNYCAA would prefer the games be restarted as soon as it is safely possible do so since it is unknown how much more delay time may become necessary later in the game.)

Either way, Referees should not restart the game until the required waiting period is over, and the additional requested warm-up time has been given (if necessary).

In any case, if the conditions surrounding any game are potentially dangerous for any reason, coaches are always entitled to take their team off the field and file a report. If the situation is not able to be resolved in a sufficient and timely manner in order to finish the game, the WNYCAA Board will make a decision concerning the outcome of the game. See Part VII (D)

PART X - General Comments

We are an organization composed of families with jobs and other obligations apart from the realm of soccer. However, the organization only works well when each of us are held to the same standard, and we all do our part to ensure the goals of the organization are accomplished in the most effective manner possible. May the Lord give us wisdom and grace as we continue to serve one another, and provide this opportunity to the children entrusted to our care. Hebrews 10:24