

NYSA Members, Club and League Leadership,

The primary mission as a USYS State Association is to promote the sport of soccer among our youth in a safe and responsible manner. Since the start of the pandemic, our purpose has been to make decisions that are in the best interest of our membership and youth soccer. One of those decisions was to take the stance that traveling to tournaments was not an allowed activity due to concerns for the safety of our membership. Contrary to our position that such activities present an unnecessary risk at this time – a position that has been well-documented through postings on the NYSA website and through a number of prior correspondences with club and league leadership- we are cognizant that certain teams have traveled and others who may intend to travel.

We were fully aware that travel would be a topic of discussion as we moved into the fall tournament season, and NYSA had been in the process of evaluating its options with respect to the management of NYSA travel through the continuing pandemic. What we did not expect was that certain clubs and teams would travel prior to policies and guidance for best practices during and return from travel, while Nevada is still in such an early phase. At the time this decision placed their own self-interests above those of the entire soccer community.

Everyone needs to remind themselves that we are in this unique situation due to a public health crisis. This crisis is real, and COVID is killing people. Members of our own association have experienced a death of a parent, have been infected, and others remain at constant risk of infection. This is a real global danger and is a particular threat to Nevadans with our state relying so heavily on travel. Nonetheless, we have found ourselves in a position of having to promulgate rules, guidelines and policies to help guide our association and protect our membership as we navigate these very difficult times.

As a general rule, NYSA does not believe traveling is a good idea at this time. The State of Nevada is in a non-contact, practice only phase as of today, 8/20/20. Since NYSA members *have* been following the Return to Play guidelines, traveling to a full contact, multi-game tournament is not in the best interest of the players. The potential for injury is increased, and they simply will not be at the top of their game to compete with teams from other states that have been practicing with contact. Remembering, too, that travel with overnight stays is not permitted until we enter Phase 4 of the Return to Play guidelines.

For those who may believe that there is a distinction between guidelines and policy – there is no distinction. Note that the Return to Play guidelines, while entitled “guidelines”, carry the force and effect of policy per Section 28 of the NYSA Policies. Violations of the guidelines are violations of Policy. We implore all of our membership to keep themselves informed on policies and changes, which can be found on our website.

We are fully aware that clubs and teams may attempt to travel using US Club Soccer or another entity as cover for their actions. For those who take this approach, please bear in mind that if

you are a member of both USYS and US Club, that makes you a member of USYS and NYSA and, accordingly, you are still subject to our rules, guidelines and Policies.

That being said, if you choose to travel against the advice and guidelines of NYSA, we are requiring the following to maintain the safety of our membership and community:

- Advanced notification of intent to travel, including teams affected and destination of travel.
- Execution of a waiver and release. This release acknowledges that the travel is contrary to NYSA and Nevada guidelines because of the increased risk of exposure to COVID-19, and that the persons traveling are assuming all risk associated therewith. This must be executed by all members of the traveling party – parents/guardians (on behalf of players), coaches, etc. Executed waivers must be filed with the NYSA office prior to departure.
- During travel: bring disinfectants, wear masks, maintain social distancing, bring your own chairs/equipment/etc. Travel with limited number of spectators and reduce your time indoors with large groups of people.
- An agreement to self-isolate the traveling party upon return for a period of two weeks. This means that the persons who traveled must stay away from other players, teams, etc., upon return. A negative test for COVID, taken upon return, may be accepted in place of the self-isolation.
- You must travel with your current and active 2020/2021 player cards, which will be released upon delivery of the completed waivers. Guidance for retrieval of players cards will be provided to club and league leadership.

For the foreseeable future, releases and waivers such as the one described above will become the norm for all activities until such time that the pandemic has passed or there are effective therapeutics and/or vaccines.

Travel under the requirements noted above does not constitute approval of travel on the part of NYSA. Rather, it solely represents an acknowledgment that 1) certain clubs and teams may elect to travel outside of the stated rules and guidelines while, 2) also offering some level of protection for the rest of the Nevada soccer community from the actions of those who may otherwise present a risk.

For those who choose to take the route of option 1, we need your full compliance with the travel safety guidelines above, in order to continue to move forward in Return to Play for Nevada.