



# Michigan State Youth Soccer Association

## Proposed Amendment to MSYSA Rule 3.7

Proposed by: Ryan Theisen, Director of Operations/Events

Date Submitted: 5/19/25

To be effective: 7/31/25

### I. Current Rule:

#### Rule 3.7: Poaching

Poaching is considered a significant offense by this Association and any league, club, or individual found to have committed a poaching violation shall be subject to a significant sanction as determined by the MSYSA board of directors. Such sanctions may include a financial penalty of \$2,000 or more, loss of coaching privileges for a year, and ineligibility to participate in MSYSA authorized events including MSYSA's State Cup Tournament, the National League Conferences or any other appropriate sanction.

Players, coaches, team officials, and/or club officials who participate for only a single season (Fall or Spring only) within the seasonal year are still subject to poaching for the entirety of the seasonal year. For the purpose of this rule a seasonal year is as defined in MSYSA Rule 2.11B.

Any club, team, or league which through its responsible officers or representatives,

- A. Attempts at any time prior to the approved Open Assessment Week of any seasonal year to induce a registered player (or their parent or their guardian) of any team, (or any team as a whole), club, or league under the jurisdiction of this Association to leave their current affiliation before the end of the current seasonal year will be considered a poaching violation.
- B. Attempts at any time prior to the approved Open Assessment Week of any seasonal year to induce a registered player (or their parent or their guardian) of any team, (or any team as a whole), club, or league under the jurisdiction of this Association to leave their current affiliation for the following seasonal year will be considered a poaching violation.
- C. In those instances in which a coach, team official or club official moves from one club to another separate and distinct club, they may not coach, or act as a team official in any capacity, for players from teams of the former club they were identified as a primary or assistant coach, team official or club official (excluding their son or daughter) for 12 months to the day of their separation from their former club. This rule does not apply under the following:



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- a) The coach, team official or club official's club dissolves.
  - b) The appropriate prior club representative – the club president or DOC – agrees in writing to permit the coach, team official, or club official to coach, or act as a team official for, players from the previous club before the 12 months of their separation from their former club has passed.
- D. For purposes of this rule, contact is not limited to personal contact, but will include direct contact by phone, text, emails, Facebook and all other social media. Responsible representatives include, but are not limited to, parents of team members, trainers, team managers, club or league board members, and club or league directors of coaching. The appropriate response by the responsible representative to player initiated contact is to provide requested information. Any recommendation for the player to attend training, tryouts or any other team, club or league soccer event by the representative would be inappropriate and considered an attempt to induce a player to leave their present soccer organization. A club or league advertising on their own website, social media, or using mass email communications is not considered poaching. MSYSA affiliated clubs who participate in unaffiliated tryouts and/or otherwise commit to players for MSYSA-affiliated teams prior to the MSYSA-approved tryout date may be at risk of poaching sanctions per Rule 3.7. Attendance by the player at such events when initiated by the player or player's parents will not be considered poaching.
- E. Activities that are allowed prior to the established tryout date are:
- a. Open Assessment Week. The Monday through Friday (5 days) prior to the established tryout date shall be considered an 'open assessment week.' Players are encouraged to train with various clubs in preparation for tryouts. Assessments of players, by teams and clubs may be offered for the purpose of determining player interest and fit within the team composition. The assessment is non-binding until the player has participated in the official tryout and committed to the club/team (signed a player agreement/contract on or after the established tryout date).
    - i. Returning Players - Teams and clubs may advise currently registered players regarding placement options on a team for the upcoming seasonal year at any time for their current team or club.
    - ii. New Players - Teams and clubs may advise new players (players not currently registered with the given team or club) regarding prospective options on a team for the upcoming seasonal year during the Open Assessment Week, and not prior.



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## **II. How the Rule Would Be Changed:**

Remove Rule 3.7 in its entirety.

## **III. Rationale:**

The poaching rule has been an extraordinary challenge for MSYSA to enforce since its initial adoption. With the emergence of competing organizations in Michigan that are not subject to MSYSA rules, this rule is placing our clubs at a disadvantage. MSYSA has proposed other rule changes to strengthen the power MSYSA clubs have at retaining their existing players and removing the poaching rule would also allow them to gain equal footing in trying to locate new players through open trainings and ID sessions.

## **Outcome:**

MSYSA Board of Director's Approved, 5-19-25.