



MARYLAND YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION ODP FOREIGN TRAVEL POLICY

I. Introduction

The US Youth Soccer ODP's philosophy is to identify players of the highest caliber on a continuing and consistent basis, which will lead to increased success for the US National Teams in the international arena. The purpose of the program is to identify a pool of players in each age group from which a National Team will be selected for international competition; to provide high-level training to benefit and enhance the development of the players at all levels; and, through the use of carefully selected and licensed coaches, develop a mechanism for the exchange of ideas and curriculum to improve all levels of coaching.

State Associations are encouraged to develop programs, including international competition, which work in tandem with Regional and National Programs. The Region 1 program specifically encourages its state associations to include international competition as a component of the state program. The value of this experience for Maryland's young players cannot be overstated. Coaches and players are only as good as the level to which they have been exposed. International competition at the State Program level prepares Maryland players for the demands of Regional and National programs.

It is the goal of the Maryland Youth Soccer Association to provide a high quality developmental experience for all the players participating in the Olympic Development Program. The purpose of ODP Foreign Travel Policy is to ensure the highest quality experience for the players, coaches, and volunteers participating in the program. It is the opinion of the MSYSA Technical Staff that the international experience is extremely important in top competitive player development. It allows our players to test themselves against some of the best youth players and clubs in the world. Lastly, it serves as preparation for participation on regional and national teams as well as college and/or professional soccer. The experiences these players bring home benefits their club teammates as well. Each player participating on a team brings to the team their soccer experiences; experiences that increase the level of a player also helps to develop the players participating with them.

It is also recognized by the staff that the cultural benefits associated with international travel is extremely important to the personal growth and development of the child. To observe and participate in a foreign culture and experience first-hand, the customs, languages, food, and ways of a different people can only enhance the child's future education and leave a lasting impression.

II. Program Administration

A. Selection of Venue and Competition

The objective of international competition is to prepare and develop players and coaches. The MSYSA Director of Coaching is responsible for overseeing the development of players and coaches of the Maryland Youth Soccer Association. The choice of venues and level of competition on an international trip is the responsibility of the MSYSA Board of Directors and the MSYSA Director of Coaching.

B. Age Groups – The age groups that will travel internationally each year will be the U13, U15, and U17 boys teams and the U14 and U16 girls teams.

C. Player Eligibility – Players in the Maryland State ODP pool who fall within the correct age parameters. If rosters are not completed by these groups, the trip will be opened to alternative Maryland State ODP age groups. If still unfilled, it can be opened to other State ODP teams.

- D. **Adult Participation** – There will be the minimum of one coach and one MSYSA board member assigned to each ODP team traveling internationally. Additional chaperones are at the discretion of the MSYSA board and Director of Coaching. At any time players are in the hotel/housing, an adult must be present in the hotel.

MSYSA Board Representative– Official representative from the MSYSA Board of Directors. The representative will be appointed by the MSYSA President. Responsible for carrying all required documentation.

Head Coach – Manages the preparation, training, and game day coaching of the team as well as oversees the planning of all practices, trainings and games on the trip. Responsible for making all decisions regarding the players.

Chaperones – Manage the daily tasks of the team including: laundry, communication home, sightseeing outings, pictures, etc.

Additional adults and parents may not travel or lodge with the team.

Coaches and Administrators cannot bring spouses/family members along on ODP trips, unless the spouse/family member is a regular part of the ODP staff or board. In the event of a spouse being a regular part of the ODP staff, participation of such staff member should not be assumed. Approval must be obtained from the MSYSA President.

III. Preparation for Travel

- A. There will be a mandatory team meeting prior to departing to introduce all participants on the trip. The agenda of the meeting will include the logistics of the trip, information on the culture of the country, expectations of protocol and manners of that particular country, language, standards of dress, the monetary system of the country, customs requirements, expectations of the players and adults, cover the code of conduct and the ramifications of violation. A copy of the MSYSA Code of Conduct signed by the player upon acceptance into the ODP Program will be distributed to the parents as a reminder. All players must have a signed MSYSA Olympic Development Program Player's Code of Conduct on file with the MSYSA State office before being permitted to travel. The Player Foreign Travel Information Form including parent and emergency contact information is to be completed and on file prior to end of the meeting. The Foreign Travel Policy will be distributed to the parents and available on the MSYSA website. A parent and the player are required to attend. This meeting is to be scheduled approximately two weeks prior to leaving. The meeting is mandatory.
- B. Code of conduct and foreign travel form are to be signed and on file with the MSYSA State office as well as a copy kept with the Board Representative on the trip. Players will automatically be sent home for the following: Use of a substance (drugs, alcohol, or, if under 18 tobacco) or possession of a substance, or both use and possession, breaking curfew outside of the housing, violation of any laws of the host country or the established laws of the United States. The cost for return trip is to be born by the parents as stated on the signed code of conduct form.

IV. Disciplinary Information

- A. If a player is sent home, it will be done at the earliest possible time at the parent's cost by whatever means is most convenient for the Program Administrators. No reimbursement of program fees will be made to the dismissed player or the player's family. (As per the ODP Player's Code of Conduct).

- B. The disciplinary hearing may take place on site or upon return to Maryland as determined by the Program Chair.
- C. If the player is from another state's ODP program, the player may be disciplined by the MSYSA coach if a minor offense. If the out of state player commits a major offense, they will be sent home at the parents' expense and the offense will be reported to the home state's office where further discipline will be determined.

V. Position Descriptions

Every Maryland State team competing abroad is expected to present a positive image for both this Association and for the United States. The State team party is an ambassador for the United States, and the party should leave a positive image of the United States and Maryland by the conduct, both on and off the field of play. The MSYSA Board Representative and Chaperones will be primarily responsible for the overall image left by the team on its travels abroad, in accordance with the following details.

MSYSA Board Representative

(a) Travel Administration:

- The MSYSA Board Representative is responsible for making arrangements and handling the return of any players or participant home early due to illness, serious injury or violations of the Code of Conduct.
- Ensures all players and parents have completed all required MSYSA documents.
- The MSYSA Board Representative is responsible for carrying with them copies of all participants' passports, insurance cards, rooming lists, Code of conduct and foreign travel forms, and any other important documentation.
- The MSYSA Board Representative will carry a list of addresses and telephone numbers of American Embassies located or serving the countries to be visited.

(b) Team Meeting Information:

- The MSYSA Board Representative will attend the scheduled team meeting for the purposes of introduction and communication of information required by the MSYSA Foreign Travel Policy.
- Is responsible for reviewing the MSYSA established requirements for all individuals to both players and parents including information on Codes of Conduct and disciplinary actions.
- The traveling party should be made aware that American citizens are subjected to the laws of the host country.

(c) Protocol:

- Speaks on all matters related to State Association policy.
- Should defer questions related to the team (player selection, performance, tactics, etc.) to the State Team Coach.
- Is sensitive to the cultural and economic advantages of the United States when speaking with foreign dignitaries or media.
- Is discreet in expressing and exchanging political, economic and religious views while traveling abroad.
- Checks with the State Team Coach / Team Administrator to ensure that all members of the team have been briefed on delicate and sensitive matters, e.g. respect for National Anthems.
- Ensures that all members of the state team party:
 - Conduct themselves at all times as good will ambassadors;

- Wear the official team uniform at all competitions and official functions;
- Attend receptions, meetings, banquets, opening and closing ceremonies, and other functions whenever possible.
- When a limited number of US Delegates are invited to meetings, receptions and functions, the Head of Delegation will attend as the spokesperson.
- Other persons will be selected to attend in consultation with the State Team Coach / Team Administrator.
- Responsible for ensuring that the Match Report is completed immediately following the match and ensuring that the report is emailed or faxed back to the Maryland State office or at least to ensure it is being done by a member of staff immediately after the match.

(d) Gifts

The exchange of inexpensive presents between Heads of visiting and host Associations and between individual players and staff has become common practice. Gifts to be exchanged by individual players and staff are purchased or arranged by the Head Chaperone. Gifts to be presented to host associations and other helpful individuals of the country are to be arranged by the Head of Delegation.

- The Head of Delegation should use discretion with respect to presentation of any gifts.
- The Head of Delegation is to ensure that all commemorative plaques or pennants (not of personal nature) are delivered to the Association's Maryland office immediately following the team's return to the United States.

Chaperones

Chaperone Responsibilities:

(a) Travel Administration

- In preparation prior to departure all chaperones will attend the scheduled team meeting for the purposes of communicating final travel information.
- Complete a background check as required by MSYSA.
- Review with the travel agency, well ahead of the Teams' departure, that all the requirements and details are in order to ensure that nothing is overlooked.

(b) Player Administration

- The Team Administrator will assist in filling out team sheets for matches (if required).
- Distribute and collect the uniforms before and after each match. Also, for making arrangements for the cleaning of the uniforms when needed.
- Arrange for and monitor medical care if needed. Keep the first aid kit stocked and made available at each practice and game.
- Arrange for the balls, cones and bibs to be well prepared and present at each practice and match.
- Arrange for the check-in of the players at hotels (or other sleeping facilities) and eating establishments.
- Support the discipline of the team in accordance with instructions from the State Team Coach.

(c) Gifts

- Individual player and staff gifts should be in the possession of the Head Chaperone, as appropriate prior to departure.
- Ties, lapel pins and pennants are appropriate articles of exchange among players and staff.



Player Foreign Travel Information Form



Team Age Group: _____ Boys Girls

Player Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Work Phone: (_____) _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____

Cell Phone: (_____) _____

E-mail: _____

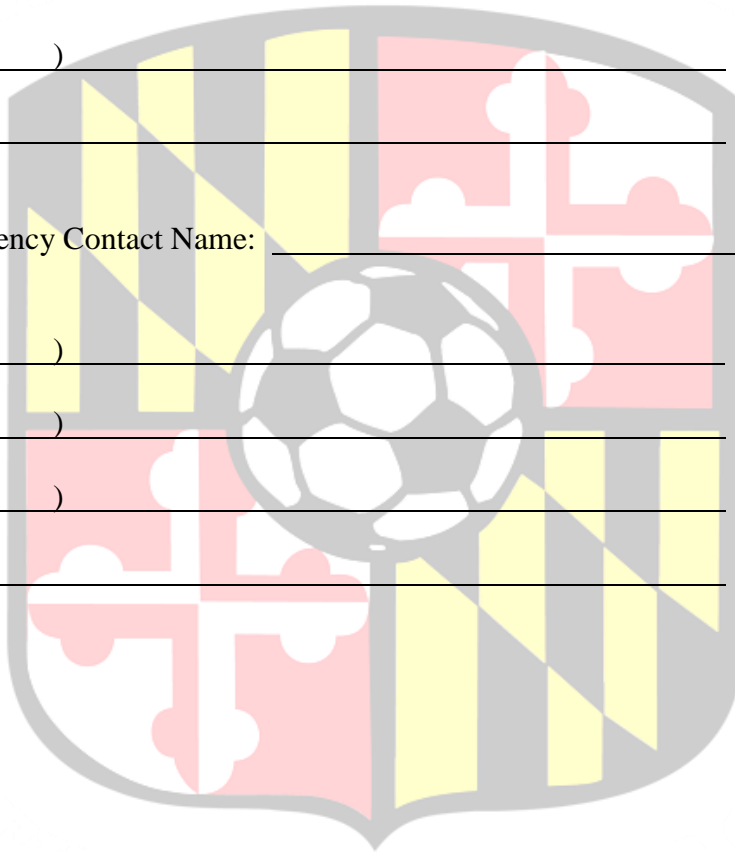
Additional Emergency Contact Name: _____

Work Phone: (_____) _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____

Cell Phone: (_____) _____

E-mail: _____





Olympic Development Program

Participants Agreement to Accept and Abide By Rules of Program

“Players Code of Conduct”

Players participating in the Olympic Development Program with US Youth Soccer are exercising a privilege afforded them by US Youth Soccer in pursuit of Regional and National recognition as youth soccer players. These players must exhibit the maturity to be successful in this pursuit. Thus, the following guidelines and rules shall apply in all activities within the Olympic Development Program.

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Players are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner which is in keeping with representing USYS and will not bring discredit upon the Association.

When traveling with the Olympic Development Program (ODP), each player is expected to dress appropriately as befits representing US Youth Soccer or as directed by the Coach.

Respect for property of others, adherence to the rules and guidelines as specified here or by the Coach/Administrator, and observance of State and Federal laws are required for participation in this program.

II. DISCIPLINE RULES & ACTIONS:

1. Substance use and/or possession thereof (drugs, alcohol and/or tobacco (by minors) is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.
2. Persistent irresponsible and disrespectful behavior is cause for dismissal from the program.
3. Destruction of property or violation of State and Federal laws is cause for dismissal from the program.
4. Failure to comply with any and all team or camp rules (curfew, attendance, dress code, schedules, etc.) may be cause for disciplinary action. Persistent failure will be cause for dismissal from the program for the remainder of the current season of this program and could affect a player's future participation.
5. Disciplinary actions such as, but not limited to, running or benching a player for a game are team discipline actions imposed by the coach. MSYSA retains the right to impose additional penalties for any violation of the code of conduct.

NOTE: If dismissal from the program or an event occurs while traveling, the player may be sent home immediately at the parent's cost by whatever means is most convenient for the program Administrators. No reimbursement of program fees will be made to the dismissed player or the player's family.

We, the undersigned, have read, understand and agree to abide by the above guidelines and rules. We also agree to accept actions taken for failure to abide by these guidelines.

Player Name (print)

Parent or Legal Guardian Name (print)

Player Signature

Date

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature