

# **OPERATING GUIDE**

## **OF**

### **CENTRAL OHIO DIVISION USA FENCING**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

USA Fencing has adopted a set of Uniform Bylaws to be used by all Divisions. The Uniform Bylaws address matters of common concern, and Section 6.9 of the Uniform Bylaws provides that each Division must function under a Division Operating Guide. USA Fencing provides the following template Division Operating Guide, but recognizing that circumstances vary from Division to Division, the Uniform Bylaws allow Divisions that wish to do so to modify this template in certain ways to accommodate local conditions and concerns. By default, Divisions that make no modification will operate under the Operating Guide as set forth below. For those Divisions that do wish to customize the Operating Guide, USA Fencing also provides Division Operating Guide Instructions for doing so.

#### **1 | PURPOSE OF THIS OPERATING GUIDE**

This Operating Guide has been written to document the established procedures, best practices, and rules of the CENTRAL OHIO Division of USA Fencing (“the Division”). It is not intended to supersede, nor may it contradict, the division Bylaws. If a policy in this Operating Guide conflicts with the Division’s Bylaws, that policy is null and void. Changes and variances to this Operating Guide may be adopted by the Division provided such modifications do not contravene USA Fencing policies or the Division Bylaws and have been submitted to and approved by USA Fencing acting through its Division Resource Team

#### **2 | WHO MAY MODIFY THIS OPERATING GUIDE**

This Operating Guide may be modified in certain respects from time to time as procedures and rules change in the Division or USA Fencing. Changes to the Operating Guide do not need a vote of the Executive Committee (sometimes herein, “EC”) of the Division unless the Division Bylaws or Operating Guide provide otherwise. However, the Division EC should review the Operating Guide on a timely basis - - at least once every three years -- and approve its continued use, or request that it may be modified as necessary. In the absence of another officer being assigned direct responsibility for this Operations Manual, the Secretary of the Division has the responsibility to maintain this document. All changes made to this document must be approved by USA Fencing, specifically the Division Resource Team.

This document is public to all members of the Division and shall always be maintained in its current form on the Division’s website or be otherwise available to members.

#### **3 | EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee comprises the officers, at-large members, and any member clubs in the Division who desire to have a voice on the Executive Committee. Officers and At-Large members of the Executive Committee may, but need not be, affiliated with a club.

##### **3.1 Officers**

The Division By-Laws define the roles and responsibilities of each officer position, which may be augmented by this Division Operating Guide.

### 3.2 At-Large Members

The Division may by written resolution or bylaw amendment provide for additional members of the Executive Committee to be elected from the membership as a whole.

### 3.3 Club Representatives

Each USA Fencing member club in good standing in the Division is entitled to representation on the Executive Committee by one individual member of that Committee who meets the qualifications stated in Section 3.0, above. If any officer or At-Large member of the Executive Committee is affiliated with a club, then that club is deemed to be represented. However, if any member club is not represented by an officer or At-Large member of the Executive Committee, then such club may, but is not required to, appoint one of its members to serve on the Executive Committee.

## 4 | ANNUAL & SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

The Division shall have at least one general membership meeting held in accordance with the Bylaws of the Division during each membership year. The Chair of the Division may call additional general meetings as necessary, and such will be held in accordance with the Bylaws of the Division.

## 5 | DIVISION ELECTIONS

Elections are held in accordance with the Bylaws of the Division and the procedures listed here, if any.

**5.1. Nominations.** The Executive Committee shall appoint a Nominating Committee which shall nominate candidates for officer positions and for Executive Committee membership. The Executive Committee may act as the Nominating Committee; otherwise, a Nominating Committee shall be composed and populated to approximate a fair cross-section of clubs and other constituencies is represented in the process. Additional nominations may be made on the written petition of not less than ten (10) of the voting membership of the Division as of the close of the preceding membership year. For a petition to be valid, it must be signed by members eligible to vote in the election for which the petition is intended, and it must legibly show the first and last names of the signers and each signature must be dated, and it must be submitted to the Nominating Committee no less than 40 days prior to the date of any election. Candidates for office shall stand for election as individuals. The Nominating Committee shall file its nominations with the Secretary and report to the full Executive Committee prior to any election.

**5.2. Balloting.** Elections shall be held at the final Division sponsored event of the fencing season which shall be on or before July 30<sup>th</sup>. Not more than one nomination is made for a position, the Secretary of THE DIVISION shall cast a unanimous ballot for that candidate. When two or more candidates are nominated for a position, then a vote may be taken by secret ballot cast in person, and the candidate receiving a majority of the votes will be elected; and in the event the meeting is being held

electronically, provision must be made for the submission of and tallying of votes by neutral tellers by email or other means. If no neutral tellers are available, the Secretary shall tally the votes. Any electronic voting shall end at noon on the day set for the election by the Executive Committee. If no candidate receives a majority, then a runoff election will be conducted immediately by the same balloting method between the candidates with the two highest vote totals. If the runoff election results in a tie for second place after two rounds of runoff voting, the winner shall be the candidate receiving a plurality of the votes. If the runoff election results in a tie between the two highest vote recipients, then the winner shall be determined by the drawing of lots.

**5.3. Proxies.** Proxies in the form attached to this Operating Guide as Appendix A are sufficient, but this form is not required. However, any submitted proxy must unambiguously identify the voting member conferring the proxy, the person holding the proxy, the date or meeting for which the proxy is given and expires, and whether the votes to be cast by proxy are specified or discretionary with the holder.

## **6 | TOURNAMENT SANCTIONING**

Only USA Fencing or the Division may sanction a USA Fencing tournament within the Division boundaries as provided in the Bylaws. Tournaments organized by USA Fencing within the Division's boundaries (such as North America Cups and regional tournaments) are not considered sanctioned by the Division and need not meet any requirements specific to the Division.

### Requirements for Division Sanctioning of Tournaments

To be a Division sanctioned USA Fencing tournament, the tournament must meet these minimum requirements:

1. The tournament must be announced at least 14 days before it begins. That announcement must be in a public forum, such as a publicly accessible web page, flyer, or announcement on "AskFred" or its equivalent, and must state the competitions to be contested, all fees that will be charged, and the name and contact information of the person to whom notices of withdrawal must be sent (See Section 10.1, below).

2. The tournament must appear on the official Division calendar as published on the Division web site (see Section 11, below) and such social media and other sites as the Division may utilize.

3. The hosting club or location and organizer must be insured for the full course of the tournament, in compliance with guidelines published by USA Fencing. This insurance must be through the USA Fencing club insurance program, or the equivalent from a third-party vendor. If the insurance is written by a third-party vendor, the Division reserves the right to obtain and approve a copy of the insurance policy (or its declarations) and a certificate of insurance before sanctioning a tournament.

4. The competition must follow the rules of USA Fencing.

5. The competition must use a tournament format approved by USA Fencing (See USA Fencing's current Athlete Handbook for approved formats).

6. All tournament officials (e.g., bout committee, referees, armorers, medical staff) and such other persons as USA Fencing policy designates must meet USA Fencing's requirements for U.S. Center for SafeSport certification, background check clearance and other qualifications, and where mandated, one or more referees of the required level must be present for the duration of the competition.

7. If a competition results in classification changes, they must be sent to both the USA Fencing National Office and the Division secretary via email and the competition results shall be posted on AskFred, Fencing Time Live, or the organizing club's website within 48 hours of the tournament's completion. Unexcused failure to meet this deadline could result in loss of an organizer's privileges to host sanctioned tournaments.

## **7 | DIVISION TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

All USA Fencing member clubs in the Division have equal access to the Division Calendar for hosting competitions. Early in August, when the new season begins, the Division will announce the "opening" of the season's calendar for tournaments on both the Division web page and on social media or by email to the Clubs.

### **7.1 Scheduling Process**

The Executive Committee sets the Division Calendar for the season at an Executive Committee meeting held no later than August 15 of each calendar year. The Executive Committee may set the first half of the calendar (August through December dates) and leave the remaining dates (January through July) for a meeting held no later than November 15th of the current year.

The scheduling process shall be as follows:

Requests for inclusion on the schedule must be submitted to the Secretary and Chair no later than July 15. Simply posting the event on AskFred will not result in the tournament being included on the Division Schedule of sanctioned.

Once the calendar is approved, it shall be posted on such media as the Division uses to communicate with its members (see Section 11, below). The Executive Committee or its delegate shall arrange for notification of the posting of the schedule with a link to where it is posted to be emailed to the Division membership as it exists on the date of posting, as long as USA Fencing provides the e-mail addresses of the members. Such notification may be sent from the USA Fencing National Office or may be sent by the Division utilizing a current and official membership list.

Clubs may request additional tournaments after publication of the schedule by sending an email to the Division Secretary providing the information needed for sanctioning. The Secretary will send a request to the Division Executive Committee requesting approval. If no objections are received within 5 days and the requested date is open, the tournament is added to the calendar.

### **7.2 Schedule Changes**

Deviations from the published calendar will be allowed with the approval of the Executive Committee or its designated subcommittee for good cause and shall be announced to the membership of the Division in the same manner as the calendar was publicized.

## **8 | DIVISION TOURNAMENTS**

The following are considered Division Tournaments, for which the Division serves as the sanctioned organizer:

- Junior Olympic Qualifiers;
- Division II, Division III, and Youth 14 Summer National Championship Qualifiers; and
- Such other competitions for which the Division serves as the organizer.

#### 8.1 Tournament Official Honorarium, Per Diem and Meals Policy for Division Events

The Division has set the following honoraria and per diem for individuals serving as officials at Division Tournaments:

Bout Committee: Full day, \$80.00  
Half day, \$40.00

Referees: Rated N, full day, \$100.00  
Half day, \$50.00

Rated R, full day, \$80.00  
Half day, \$50.00

Rated L, full day, \$60.00  
Half day, \$40.00

Referees who fence may trade all or part of entry fees for referee pay. Bout committee members who also referee may be paid a bonus. All payments are conditioned upon the tournament for which payment is sought generating sufficient gross funds to pay; otherwise, payment may be lowered. Nothing herein shall preclude the organizer from paying higher amounts.

#### 8.2 Travel and Hotel

The Division may provide additional compensation for tournament officials traveling an unusual distance. In addition, hotel accommodations are provided, as needed, for Division Tournaments. The officials may be asked to share a room with another official of the same gender and appropriate age.

### 9 | CLUB TOURNAMENTS

Clubs are encouraged by the Division to host competitions throughout the year. These may be “Unsanctioned” or “Sanctioned”.

Unsanctioned competitions may be of any type and may conflict with any tournament on the Division Calendar but do not award USA Fencing classifications. These competitions should state clearly that they are being held “unsanctioned” when advertised/posted on AskFred, social media or by other means.

Clubs and other private organizers holding Division sanctioned tournaments are responsible for posting the results of the competitions and reporting any classification changes as provided in Section 6.1.7 of this Operating Guide. The reports shall include a list of SafeSport qualified officials, indicating their

positions at the tournament, the ratings of all referees used in the competitions and the name of the Division representative in attendance, as provided in Section 4.4 of the Division Bylaws.

## **10 | TOURNAMENT FEES**

The Division does not have any official position on the fees that a club may charge for tournament registration or entry, but such fees must be stated in the official announcement of the competition. Such fees must be uniform for all competitors, except for any complementary entry or other allowance given to Division Officers/Executive Committee members.

If an organizer intends to charge an entrance or other fee to non-competitors, it must apply equally to all such individuals, including, for example, to affiliates of the organizing club. The Division will not sanction any club competition in which excessive fees are charged by an organizer to non-club members or if any other deliberate pattern of discouraging attendance is employed. Organizers may, however, limit access to the venue where space or safety considerations require, so long as such limitation is not discriminatory.

### **10.1 Division Tournament Refund Policy**

Any fencer who has pre-paid fees for a Division Tournament and is unable to fence in that tournament due to a family emergency, injury or other valid emergency excuse will have all paid fees refunded within a reasonable time after the conclusion of the tournament if the organizer was timely notified of the withdrawal in advance of the competition.

Fencers who withdraw for non-emergency reasons will not have the registration portion of the fee (if one is charged) refunded, and entry fees will not be refunded unless the fencer withdraws more than 72 hours in advance of the competition to which it applies.

For those cases in which a fencer qualifies to a national tournament by another route after paying to fence in the Division qualifier, the fencer's competition entry fees for the qualifier will be refunded, but not the registration fee, if one is charged.

## **11 | DIVISION WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE**

The Division shall establish an internet presence that is made known to and is accessible by the Division members. That presence may be in the form of a proprietary URL, a dedicated Facebook page, or similar social media outlet. The Division website ([www.sampledivision.com](http://www.sampledivision.com)) is self-managed by the Secretary of the Division unless the Bylaws or this Operating Guide assign that function to another officer. The Division has the following additional social media accounts that it manages: Any established by written resolution.

## **12 | DIVISION EQUIPMENT & USAGE**

The Division presently does not maintain equipment for use by its member clubs.

## **13 | DIVISION CLUB RENTAL POLICY**

The Division will pay an agreed sum to any Division Member, Division Club, or other person or entity whose venue or equipment is used to host a Division Tournament or Division sponsored clinic or other

function. The amount and terms of payment for this service requires approval of the Division's Executive Committee.

#### **14 | INDEMNIFICATION**

Upon request and except as otherwise provided herein, every person who is or has been a Board Member, Officer, Manager, or Assistant Manager or Executive Director of the Organization and their heirs and legal representatives are hereby indemnified by the Organization against expenses and liabilities, including attorney's fees and costs, actually and necessarily incurred by them in connection with the defense of either (1) any action, suit or proceeding to which they may be a party defendant; or (2) any claim of liability asserted against them, by reason of their being or having been Board Member, Officer, Manager, Assistant Manager, or Executive Director of the Organization. Without limitation, the term "expenses" includes any amount paid or agreed to be paid to the Organization itself. The Organization does not, however, indemnify any Board Member, Officer, Manager, Assistant Manager, or Executive Director in respect to any matter as to which they shall be finally adjudged liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of duties to the Organization, nor, in the case of a settlement, unless such settlement shall be found to be in the interest of the Organization by: (1) the court having jurisdiction over the action, suit or proceeding against such person or of a suit involving their right to indemnification, or (2) a majority of the Board Of Directors Members of the Organization then in office other than those involved in such matter (whether or not such majority constitutes a quorum) or if there are not at least two Board Of Directors Members of the Organization then in office other than those involved in such matter, by a majority of the Board who are not involved, provided that such indemnity in cases of a settlement shall not be allowed by such Board Members or any committee thereof unless the settlement agreement is found by independent legal counsel (meaning a lawyer who is not a member, officer, manager/coach, director, officer, shareholder, or employee of the Organization, and is not a partner or professional associate of a member, officer, manager, director, officer, shareholder, or employee of the Organization) that such settlement agreement is reasonable in amount and in the interest of the Organization. The foregoing right of indemnification shall be in addition to all rights to which any Director, Officer, Manager, Assistant Manager, or Executive Director may be entitled as a matter of law. The indemnifying party shall have the right to appoint or approve legal counsel, and no settlement may be entered into without the written approval of the indemnifying party.

APPENDIX A  
VOTING PROXY FORM

Name of Member:

USA Fencing Membership #

Club Affiliation:

Choose one only:

I designate \_\_\_\_\_ to vote on my behalf

I wish to vote for the following candidates/position, etc.:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Line, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (Required)

This Proxy is valid for no more than thirty (30) days after the above signature date.

Note: You must be voting member of USA Fencing by Feb. 1 of the membership year to be eligible to vote and/or assign a proxy. The Division will validate every proxy form received before the election is held.

--End--