

**BY-LAWS OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA FOOTBALL  
OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION, INC.**

REVISED AND ADOPTED  
July 2011

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**GERARDO “JERRY” GOMEZ, PRESIDENT  
DONGRAY “DJ” JOHNSON, VICE PRESIDENT  
ROBERTO “BOB” MORALES, SECRETARY  
JOHN G. BRANDOW, JR., TREASURER  
ALEX BARINAGA, TRAINING DIRECTOR  
GLYN BRADLEY, DIRECTOR  
GABRIEL QUINTANA, DIRECTOR**

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## **ARTICLE 1 – NAME**

1. This Association shall be known as the SOUTH FLORIDA FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION, INC. (SFFOA).

## **ARTICLE 2 – AUTHORITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**

1. The SFFOA is an independent organization.
2. The SFFOA is authorized to carry out subsidiary business ventures consistent with its purpose.
3. The SFFOA may function in co-operation with the Greater Miami Athletic Conference Officials Association (GMACOA), the Greater Miami Athletic Conference Football Officials Association (GMACFOA) and any other organization, which in the opinion of the Board of Directors will assist in carrying out its purpose.

## **ARTICLE 3 – PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of the SFFOA is to promote football officiating, and/or sports officiating to provide officiating services through its members and carry out all other functions incidentally related thereto, and perform any function related to football officiating or otherwise allowed by Florida Law.

## **ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP**

1. Membership in the SFFOA shall be open upon application to officials who comply with the By-Laws of the SFFOA as they exist or may be amended to from time to time.
2. Membership is not automatic and shall be granted annually upon:
  - a. Application to the SFFOA,
  - b. Payment of all fees as established by the SFFOA Board of Directors. Fees are non-refundable.
  - c. Establishment of good moral character of the applicant by either,
    - i. Submitting to a Level 2 background screening in connection with FHSAA and either GMACFOA or BCAAOA, or
    - ii. After review and acceptance by the SFFOA Board of Directors of a criminal records check conducted by SFFOA's online records check vendor at applicant's expense together with a written explanation of reasons for not submitting to the Level 2 screening as outlined in Article 4, 2ci,
  - d. Successful completion of annual training conducted by SFFOA and/or GMACFOA or other training as outlined below,
    - i. Completing GMACFOA Beginners' Rules Clinic with a final average score of 70, first and second year officials and those directed to attend by training and/or assignment secretary are

- required to attend (GMACFOA Promotional Credit is awarded based on the GMACFOA By-Laws),
- ii. Completion of the GMACFOA Intermediate/Advanced Clinic with a final average score of 70, or
  - iii. Successful completion of a similar course offered by BCAAOA or other FHSAA sanctioned association.
  - iv. A member may request based on experience and extenuating circumstances to complete required training by completing SFFOA Online Rules Course.
  - v. A member may request based on years of service, a 5-year record of scoring 90 or above of FHSAA and self-study to have training requirement waived conditioned on a score of 90 or better on current year SFFOA examination.
  - vi. Request must be directed to the Board who will approve or deny such requests.
3. Members may also be members of other officials' associations, which may or may not be recognized or sanctioned by the FHSAA, however the SFFOA shall be considered the primary youth league association and SFFOA assignments shall take precedence over any other youth league assignments.
  4. Members are independent contractors, and as such are not employees of the SFFOA or any organization, which uses the services of the SFFOA, or its members.
  5. Application for membership must be filed annually upon forms provided by the Board of Directors. These By-Laws are made available to every applicant upon who files an application form and pays the appropriate fees. By applying, each applicant acknowledges receipt, responsibility to read, understand and abide by these By-Laws, and subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.
  6. The Board of Directors shall have authority to suspend or expel a member for conduct that is deemed to be contrary to the best interest of this Association, or any institution or organization to which officiating services are provided.
  7. All memberships expire on June 30<sup>th</sup> each year.
  8. The use of the words "he", "him", "his" throughout these By-Laws shall be interpreted to apply equally to both male and female members of this Association.

#### **ARTICLE 5 – THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

1. The Board of Directors shall consist of five incorporators, who shall serve as only Board members until the last meeting of 1994. At the last meeting in September 1994, two Board members at large shall be elected. Thereafter, the Board of Directors shall consist of a President, Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer, plus the two officers at large. Future elections and terms of office are detailed in Article 7 of these By-Laws. Commencing at the end of the 2003 competitive season, a transitional Board shall be elected to guide the SFFOA to establishment of its independence from the GMACFOA. The directors of the GMACFOA will no longer be officers of this Association pro hoc vice and must be elected from the membership of this Association. The transitional Board of Directors shall

consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and two At-Large Directors (A and B). At the last meeting of the 2004 season an election shall be held for all positions as set forth in Article 7 of these By-Laws. In July of 2011 after successive years of no quorum for the annual meeting and election the Board of Directors amended the By-Laws as authorized to provided that existing Board of Directors will serve until resignation, retirement, expulsion or death and that future vacancies on the Board shall be filled by election within the Board of Directors. (History of Board make-up)

## **ARTICLE 6 – OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES**

1. The Officers of this Association shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, Treasurer, Training Director and two (2) Directors.
2. The duties of the Officers and Directors of this Association are as follows:
  - a. The President shall:
    - i. Preside over all general meetings and Board meetings of the SFFOA.
    - ii. Plan each meeting agenda with input from the Board of Directors.
    - iii. Appoint Committees as necessary to perform specific functions.
    - iv. Perform other duties as determined by the Board deemed necessary and consistent with the purpose of SFFOA
  - b. The Vice-President shall:
    - i. Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors.
    - ii. Act in the absence or inability of the President.
    - iii. Serve as a Regional Supervisor
    - iv. Perform other duties as determined by the Board deemed necessary an consistent with the purpose of SFFOA.
  - c. The Secretary shall:
    - i. Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors.
    - ii. Take minutes of all Board and/or membership meetings.
    - iii. Record the attendance of members at any general meeting.
    - iv. Handle the necessary correspondence of the SFFOA.
    - v. Perform other duties as determined by the Board deemed necessary and consistent with the purpose of SFFOA.
  - d. The Treasurer shall:
    - i. Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors
    - ii. Receive all monies paid to this Association and deposit them in a bank account at a financial institution that is approved by the Board of Directors.
    - iii. Issue checks as payment of debts that accrue to this Association.
    - iv. Maintain all financial records of the Association.
    - v. Report the financial position of the association at the times and in the manner specified by the Board of Directors.
    - vi. Perform other duties as determined by the Board deemed necessary and consistent with the purpose of SFFOA.
  - e. The Training Director shall:
    - i. Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors.
    - ii. Serve as SFFOA Rules Interpreter

- iii. Develop SFFOA Training Objectives.
- iv. Other duties as outlined in Article 11.
- v. Perform other duties as determined by Board deemed necessary and consistent with the purpose of SFFOA.
- f. The Directors shall:
  - i. Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors.
  - ii. Serve as a Regional Supervisor
  - iii. Perform other duties as determined by Board deemed necessary and consistent with the purpose of SFFOA

**ARTICLE 7 – QUALIFICATIONS FOR DIRECTORS,  
PROCEDURE TO FILL VACANCIES, COMPENSATION AND  
REMOVAL OF DIRECTORS FROM OFFICE**

1. Any member in good standing of the SFFOA for a minimum of 5 immediately preceding years is qualified to serve of the Board of Directors.
2. Any vacancy on the Board of Directors shall be filled by election from the remaining members of the Board of Directors by majority vote.
3. Board Members may be required to provided additional time and service to SFFOA including but not limited to attendance at league meetings, coaches orientation/training and visiting game sites to observe members at work and maintain a level of Board supervision. Board Members may be compensated as follows:
  - a. Per diem of \$30 to attend a coaches orientation/training, visit game sites or other extended function sponsored by a league under contract or being solicited by SFFOA. Per diem of \$10 for site visits if members is also assigned to work games.
  - b. Per diem of \$10 to attend a evening league meeting.
  - c. Board members may be reimbursed direct expenses not specifically covered by per diem such as copying or other expense relating to the business of SFFOA.
  - d. Board of Directors may in lieu of per diem decide on flat annual compensation stipend to Directors of a reasonable amount reflected of those expanded duties.
4. Removal of an Officer or Director shall be only for cause as outlined in Article 8 of these By-Laws for not attending meetings or for actions detrimental to the best interest of SFFOA with all relevant facts to be vetted through grievance proceeding according to Article 12 of these By-Laws.

**ARTICLE 8 – MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION AND BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS, QUORUM, AGENDAS, ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES**

1. The President, or a majority of the Board of Directors may call regular meetings and Board of Directors meetings of the SFFOA

2. Special meetings of the SFFOA or the Board of Directors may be called by the President or a majority of the Board of Directors.
3. There shall be at least one regular meeting for the membership of SFFOA each year which shall be determined by the Board of Directors.
4. The Board of Directors shall meet as necessary, upon the call of the President or a majority of the Board of Directors.
5. If Board action is necessary before a meeting can be conveniently scheduled, Board may vote and take action using e-mails, Secretary shall record any Board action and votes taken in this manner.
6. A majority of the Officers and Directors shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business at meetings of the Board of Directors. There shall be no vote by Proxy.
7. The agenda for any meeting of the Association shall be established by the President with the advice and input of the Board of Directors during the planning process. A majority of the Board of Directors if necessary may also establish the Agenda.
8. Attendance at regular meetings of this association by its membership is a prerequisite to game assignment. Attendance at scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors is an obligation of each Officer and Director.
  - a. A member or Director who fails to attend a meeting as a result of an SFFOA assignment is not considered absent. The President and/or the Board of Directors may excuse absences due or related to a members' livelihood, family or other emergency on a case-by-case basis. Excessive unexcused absences from regular meetings will result in removal of the member from the assignment roster. Attendance at meetings shall be a factor considered in postseason assignments.
  - b. An Officer or Director who is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors shall be removed unless the absence(s) is (are) excused by a majority of the Board of Directors.
9. Roberts Rules of Order (as revised) shall prevail at all meetings of the Association.

**ARTICLE 9 – ASSIGNER, GAME ASSIGNMENTS, AVAILIBLTY  
FOR ASSIGNMENT, FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR, TARDINESS, OR  
LATE CANCELLATION OF ASSIGNMENT**

1. The President with the approval of the Board of Directors shall appoint one member who otherwise meets the qualifications to serve as an Officer or Director as Assigner who shall;
  - a. Attend all Board of Directors meetings,
  - b. Appoint regular and alternate Crew Chiefs,
  - c. Develop Crews List and Alternate Officials Lists
  - d. Enter league schedules into Arbiter
  - e. Assign officials and publish schedule
  - f. Maintain records of league, team and member assignments

2. The compensation of the Assigner shall be set by the President, but shall not exceed the amounts actually charged to the leagues, organizations or institutions serviced.
3. Assignments to contests serviced by the SFFOA shall be made in co-operation with the Booking Commissioner of the GMACFOA. Assignments from the SFFOA shall have precedence over all other youth league assignments.
4. A member whose scheduling availability creates a hardship on the Assigner may be removed from the assignment roster by the Board of Directors upon the request of the Assigner.
5. A member who fails to appear for an assignment without good cause as determined by the Assigner shall be suspended from assignments for at least one week and fined minimum of one game fee, unless recommended for expulsion by the Assigner.
6. An official who cancels an assignment less than 24 hours prior to the start of an assignment without good cause as determined by the Assigner, shall be fined at least one game fee and may have assignments restricted or withheld based on the circumstances.
7. Assignments are made and published based on a members' availability and it is each member's responsibility to keep their availability properly updated to avoid conflicts. Since members are not reimbursed for travel games are assigned as a set and members are not free to accept or decline individual games. Once published members turning back any assignment without good cause as determined by the Assigner shall be fined according to the following schedule:
  - a. \$5.00 for the first offense provided it is more than 24 hours in advance,
  - b. \$15.00 for the second offense provided that it is more than 24 hours in advance of the assignment,
  - c. One game (Maximum Rate) fee for the third offense.
  - d. Expulsion for any incident beyond the third that may be reduced to a suspension for the remaining of that competitive season upon written request and showing that problems causing issues have been corrected,
  - e. Failure to take action on published assignments will be treated as the next level of turn back.
8. Member Officials are required to arrive at least thirty minutes to acquaint themselves with their assigned locations, field conditions, greet the park commissioner and address other issues as necessary. Tardiness of less than fifteen minutes may be addressed less sternly and may receive a warning upon first occasion before proceeding to the imposition of fines as outlined in Paragraph 5 above, tardiness of more than fifteen minutes will result in the imposition of fines as outlined in Paragraph 5 above. Tardiness that delays the start of a game or after a game is started shorthanded shall be subject to more severe consequence in addition to the withholding of a portion of the game fee by the park as provided by contract.
9. Assignments shall be withheld until fines are paid.
10. Monetary fines may be deposited into the bank account of the association for use by the SFFOA or may be earmarked for use as part of SFFOA Community Service Project.



## **ARTICLE 10 – REFEREE/CREW CHIEFS**

1. The Assigner shall with the approval of the Board of Directors appoint a number of members to serve as regular Crew Chiefs during the competitive season and still others who may serve as reserve or alternate Crew Chiefs in the event of need due to demand or unavailability.
2. The position of regular or even alternate Crew Chief is an honor or privilege bestowed upon a member who expresses interest in serving in that capacity and has demonstrated the ability to carry out the responsibilities there on not bestowed as a matter of right based on years of service or experience, however no member shall serve as regular crew chief until at least having completed three years of experience as an official.
3. A Crew Chief shall act as a liaison for the Board of Directors and conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent of the standards set forth by SFFOA.
4. Crew chiefs shall work primarily at referee in order to make them more readily identifiable based on the white hat, however it is understood that there may be an occasion where crew chief will work in another position in order for an alternate crew chief to gain more experience under direct supervision or to work with another crew member desirous of learning the position of referee with the hope of becoming a crew chief.
5. A Crew Chief shall also:
  - a. Be responsible for addressing Park Commissioners of any issues,
  - b. Be well instructed and knowledgeable of rule variations amongst leagues and classifications and/or levels,
  - c. Resolve any issues amongst members of the crew,
  - d. Assume the responsibility of continuing training and development of officials assigned to the crew,
  - e. Provide feedback to official assigned to them directly as well as to the Assignment Secretary and the Board of Directors,
  - f. Oversee that contract provisions or requirements are carried out
  - g. Record game scores and file game reports as required.
6. Crew Chiefs understand that they currently serve in the capacity without additional compensation although the time may come when the position carries additional compensation based on the additional responsibilities.

## **ARTICLE 11- RULES OF PLAY, INTERPRETATIONS, OFFICIATING MECHANICS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICIALS, THE RULES INTERPRETER AND TRAINING DIRECTOR**

1. Members shall officiate all contests which are assigned by the Assigner according to the football rules published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, with such variations to the rules as may be authorized by the

- FHSAA and/or the organizations or institutions serviced by SFFOA, or other rule if adopted by an organization or institution serviced by SFFOA. A member shall not accept responsibility for, nor enforce organization specific rules that govern player certification, eligibility or participation
2. Members shall use officiating mechanics prescribed and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, which may be amended by the Board of Directors as a result of the requirements of the level of play of contest serviced by the SFFOA.
  3. The Training Director shall serve as Rules Interpreter who shall be the sole voice of the Association when interpretation of rules is requested by a serviced organization or institution. The interpretation shall be published and disseminated to the members as a training tool and to achieve consistent and uniform application of the rules.
  4. The Training Director shall also be responsible for developing curriculum for annual training including but not limited to course and/or testing materials.
  5. The Training Director shall also be responsible for reviewing and disseminating available training materials to membership.
  6. The Training Director shall also develop and circulate a weekly bulletin updating policies or procedures of the Association or leagues serviced by SFFOA.

#### **ARTICLE 12 – GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

1. Members may file a grievance in writing with the Secretary, who shall notify the President within two (2) working days of receipt of the grievance.
2. The President shall call a special meeting of the Board of Directors for the purpose of reviewing and resolving the grievance. Such meeting shall be held within ten (10) working days of the Secretary's notification to the President.
3. The Board of Directors shall investigate and resolve the grievance by majority vote. If the grieving member is an Officer or Director of the Association, or if an Officer or Director is the subject of the grievance, he shall be disqualified from participation in the deliberations of the Board of Directors, which follow the investigation.
4. The Board of Directors shall decide on how the grievance is to be handled which may include a decision to remove an Officer or Director, suspension or expulsion of a member, assessment of a monetary penalty, deciding whether there is good cause for missing or canceling an assignment exists, whether failure to attend a meeting should be excused and/or lifting a suspension imposed by the Booking Commissioner.
5. If the subject of the grievance such that a monetary fine was imposed the fine must be paid or the grievance shall be summarily denied, should the Board of Directors determine that the grievance lacks probable cause, malicious, frivolous or otherwise without merit the Board of Directors shall impose costs of no less than \$10.
6. The Secretary shall respond to both the grieving and aggrieved member within ten (10) working days of the meeting.
7. The Board of Directors' decision regarding the grievance is final.



**ARTICLE 13 – AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE AND BIND, AND  
LIMITATION OF CONTRACTS**

1. The Board of Directors shall negotiate booking and game fees with the organizations and institutions that use SFFOA services and may bind the Association to an agreement not to exceed three years.

**ARTICLE 14 – SUBSIDIARY ENTITIES AND ANCILLARY BUSINESSES**

1. The Board of Directors is authorized to create any subsidiary entity that the Board deems is in the best interest of SFFOA and its members and is consistent with its purpose understanding that:
  - a. Membership in the SFFOA does not guarantee membership or participation in that subsidiary entity or venture, however SFFOA members may be provided incentives or discounts for participating.
  - b. Membership in the subsidiary entity may be extended to non-SFFOA members and membership in the SFFOA is not required to participate in the subsidiary entity.
2. There may be occasion where the SFFOA may engage in some ancillary business for the benefit of its members that may include the sale of garments or equipment with the SFFOA or subsidiary's logo, investments or assigning officials to work events or sports other than football.

**ARTICLE 15 – AMENDMENTS**

1. These By-Laws may be amended as necessary at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors unless specified otherwise; amendments to the By-Laws shall become effective immediately upon adoption. Amendments shall be made available to all members upon adoption.
2. No amendment shall be made that conflicts with provisions of State and Federal Law and should any of the provisions of these By-Laws be declared unconstitutional or illegal only that provision shall be struck and all others shall remain in full force and effect.