

# OPERATING GUIDE

Northeast Pennsylvania Division

USA Fencing



**USA**  
FENCING

**OPERATING GUIDE**

**Northeast Pennsylvania Division of United States Fencing Association**

**Adopted July 2023**

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## 1 Purpose of this Operating Guide

This Operating Guide has been written to document the established procedures, best practices, and rules of the Northeast Pennsylvania 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.

## 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.

Possible additional duties to be assigned to officers, appointed individuals or committees may include, but are not limited to:

- Regional tournament proposals and coordination
- Division Points lists and updates
- Website upkeep (when not done by the Secretary)
- Collegiate fencing club coordination / support
- Support for Division sponsored tournaments and/or qualifiers (either onsite or otherwise, i.e., adding Division Tournaments on AskFred)

### **3.2 At-Large Members**

The Division will elect one (1) At-Large member to serve on the Executive Committee.

### **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.

Clubs should verify their Representative with the Executive Committee within 14 days of the Annual Meeting if not appointed at the Annual Meeting.

### **3.4 First Vice-Chair**

The First Vice-Chair shall perform such duties as the Chair and the Division Operating Guide may assign, and should the Chair be absent or unable to perform the duties of that office, the Vice-Chair shall perform the same until the Chair is again present and able to act.

### **3.5 Second Vice-Chair (Past Chair)**

The Second Vice-Chair will assist the other officers as needed and will be responsible for maintenance and allocation of any equipment owned or maintained by the Division.

### **3.6 Officer Benefits**

Division Officers and members of the Executive Committee will receive no benefits or compensation for serving on the Board

## **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.

The Annual Meeting will be announced via Email through the USA Fencing National Office and sent to all members of the Division.

The Division Chair will produce agendas for all meetings unless delegated to another board member.

## **5 Division Elections**

Elections are held in accordance with the Bylaws of the Division and the procedures listed here:

- An open nomination for Offices and At-Large Members will be called under New Business of the Annual Meeting.
- Once Officers and At-Large Members have been elected, the Board will accept appointments from Member Clubs for Club Representatives who meet requirements for serving on the Executive Committee as defined in the Bylaws and Operating Guide.

### 5.1 Offices to be Elected

The following offices will be elected at the Annual Meeting: First Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and one (1) At-Large Member.

The First Vice-Chair will be elected to a three year term. The first year as First Vice-Chair, the second year as Chair, and the third year as Second Vice-Chair (Past Chair).

### 5.2 Proxies

If a member of the Division wishes to vote by proxy, they may utilize Appendix A and submit the form to the Executive Meeting by either emailing the Division Chair or have their Proxy present the form to the Chair prior to the Annual Meeting.

## 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.

### 6.1 Requirements for Division Sanctioning of Tournaments

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

- A. The request for Sanctioning should be received by the Executive Committee at least 28 days before it begins.
- ~~B.~~ 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, in addition to posting the tournament on "AskFred," 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).
- C. 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) before sanctioning a tournament.

- D. The competition must follow the rules of USA Fencing.
- E. The competition must use a tournament format approved by USA Fencing (See USA Fencing's current Athlete Handbook for approved formats).
- F. 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.
- G. 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.
- H. Requests from member clubs wishing to hold tournaments should have the following minimum information and submitted to the Executive Committee:
  - Date of competitions
  - Name of the tournament
  - Type of competitions (classification)
  - Location
  - Competitions to be contested
- I. The tournament organizer will submit back to the Division a fee of \$2.00 per fencer/per event who competed in the event.

## 7. Division Tournament Schedule

All USA Fencing member clubs in the Division have equal access to the Division Calendar for hosting competitions. At the Annual Meeting, 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.

AskFRED will serve as the Division's Tournament Schedule.

All Sanctioned tournaments must be posted on AskFRED 14 days prior to the event start date.

## 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.

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. 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, 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 will set an honoraria and per diem on an individual tournament basis which will be based on the National reimbursement schedule and tournament scale.

## 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.

## **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.nepafencing.org](http://www.nepafencing.org)) is self-managed by the Secretary of the Division unless the Bylaws or this Operating Guide assign that function to another officer.

## **12 Division Equipment & Usage**

The Division maintains a limited amount equipment for Member Club use. Member Clubs can request use of this equipment and if approved by the Executive Committee it will be assigned to that club once the Equipment Loan Agreement (Appendix B) is completed.

The equipment loan is valid until the following Annual Meeting when the request is again reviewed if requested by the club.

## **13 Division Club Rental Policy**

The Division will pay an agreed sum to any Division Member Club whose venue 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.

# Appendix A: The Northeast Pennsylvania Division Election Proxy Form

The Northeast Pennsylvania Division of USA Fencing, LLC.

20\_\_ - 20\_\_

ELECTION PROXY FORM

Name of Member: \_\_\_\_\_

USA Fencing Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Choose only one:

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

I wish to vote for the following candidates / positions (Absentee Ballot):

Signature of Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date (Required): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Note: You must be a 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.

## Appendix B: Division Fencing Equipment Loan Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree that I am taking possession of and responsibility for the following items of fencing equipment in order to participate in competitions and other related events in the Northeast Pennsylvania Division of USA Fencing.

	Item	Condition
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

*The foregoing reflects the condition of the above listed equipment on the date issued.*

All items listed are on temporary loan to me from the Northeast Pennsylvania Division of USA Fencing.

I further covenant and agree:

1. All of the item(s) listed above shall remain the property of the Northeast Pennsylvania Division of USA Fencing. I will maintain and care for the equipment at my own cost and expense, including repairs as necessary.
2. I will ensure that the item(s) are present, and in good working order, at divisional events when required.
3. Upon my leaving the Northeast Pennsylvania Division for any reason whatsoever, or upon demand from the executive committee of the Northeast Pennsylvania Division, I will immediately return all of the item(s) listed above to the Northeast Pennsylvania Division in the same condition in which it was received, normal wear and tear excepted.
3. In the event I do not immediately return the item(s) listed above, regardless of the reason, I will provide replacement equipment of equal or better quality or will pay the reasonable cost to the Northeast Pennsylvania Division to replace all the said item(s).
4. In the event the Northeast Pennsylvania Division is required to incur costs or expenses to enforce this agreement, I will reimburse the Northeast Pennsylvania Division for all such costs, including without limitations, attorney fees and court costs.
5. The recipient will maintain USA Fencing Member Club Status
6. The will make a report of the equipment status to either the Executive board via email or at the Annual Meeting.
7. Continued use of the equipment must be requested yearly at the Annual Meeting and approved by the Executive Board.

Name:	
Address:	
Club:	
Phone:	Email:

Loanee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Division Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment Loan Extension Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_  Equipment Returned on: \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in Condition as reported by Loanee:

Equipment Loan Extension Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_  Equipment Returned on: \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in Condition as reported by Loanee:

Equipment Loan Extension Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_  Equipment Returned on: \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in Condition as reported by Loanee:

Equipment Loan Extension Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_  Equipment Returned on: \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in Condition as reported by Loanee:

Equipment Loan Extension Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_  Equipment Returned on: \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in Condition as reported by Loanee:

Equipment Returned on: \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in Condition as reported by Division Representative:

## Appendix C: Referee Certification Reimbursement

The Northeast Pennsylvania Division will reimburse a member of the division up to \$100 for completing their referee certification and serving as a referee at events held in the Division.

Upon completing their certification and submitting for reimbursement, the referee will be granted \$25. When the referee works a division event, either sanctioned or unsanctioned, they may submit reimbursement to the division for an additional \$25 for up to three events over two years. This is in addition to any payment made to the referee by the tournament organizer.

The referee candidate should notify the board of their interest in becoming a referee by completing the top portion of this form.

### Notification of Intent to Become a Referee

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location and Date of Referee Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Location and Date of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

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### For Board Use

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

### Reimbursements

Certification Completed: _____ Check Number: _____ Date: _____	Tournament 1: _____ Check Number: _____ Date: _____
Tournament 2: _____ Check Number: _____ Date: _____	Tournament 3: _____ Check Number: _____ Date: _____