

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS BUFFALO STALLIONS.

MEMBER HANDBOOK 2022/2023

Revised 4/15/2022

MEMBER HANDBOOK – 2022/2023

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS – Commitment Policy

To be eligible for participation in any EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS program, prospective players, their parents or legal guardians, coaching staff and volunteers are required to agree to the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS Commitment Policy as explained below. If after you have read the Commitment Policy, you understand and agree to it, please complete the required background and emergency information and also to make an initial tuition payment, all of which are required in order to participate in the program

Membership Agreement:

By either making the first payment, or payment in full for this registration, the parent / legal guardian confirms that they have read, understand and accept the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS COMMITMENT POLICY. They confirm that the player they are registering and for whom they are a parent or legal guardian, is in good health and physically able to train and play in the Academy games and tournaments with no medical conditions or physical limitations preventing full participation. In addition, the parent / legal guardian also agrees on behalf of themselves, any players for whom they are a parent or legal guardian, and themselves and their heirs and assigns:

(1) To use best efforts to attend and participate in all activities of the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS as are requested of me;

(2) If a parent or legal guardian, to assure that those players for whom I am responsible will attend and participate

in all activities of the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS as are requested of them;

(3) To timely pay to the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, Inc. the full tuition and expenses as are required of me; and

(4) To immediately notify both the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS and the respective coaching staff of any conditions developing during the season that may prevent continuing participation fully in the activities of the Academy. To hold the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, Inc., its directors, officers, employees, coaching staff and volunteers harmless from any and all liability, claims and demands of every kind that may arise by or in connection with participation in any activities of the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, Inc.

Medical/Legal Release:

- Participation in any sport or sport related activity could be a dangerous activity involving risks of injury, including significant impairment of long-term health and well-being, serious injury to virtually any part of the mind and body, and even worse. Each player and his/her parent or legal guardian therefore must confirm that the player is in good health and physically able to train and play in the Academy games and

tournaments and further has no medical conditions or physical limitations that would prevent him/her from fully participating in the activities of the Empire Buffalo Stallions club. Each player and his/her parent or legal guardian also must immediately notify both the Empire Buffalo Stallions and the respective coaching staff of any conditions developing during the season that may prevent the player from continuing to participate fully in the activities of the Academy. Each player and his/her parent or legal guardian must also waive any and all claims against the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, its directors, officers, employees, coaching staff and volunteers by reason of any physical, mental or emotional injuries or otherwise alleged to have been caused by participation in any activities of the Academy.

- As the parent / legal guardian of the registered player, the parent / legal guardian requests that in their absence the registered player be admitted to any hospital or medical facility for diagnosis and treatment. the parent / legal guardian request and authorize physicians, dentists, and staff, duly licensed as Doctors of Medicine or Doctors of Dentistry or other such licensed technicians or nurses, to perform any diagnostic procedures, treatment procedures, operative procedures and x-ray treatment of the above minor. The parent / legal guardian has not been given a guarantee as to the results of examination or treatment. The parent / legal guardian accepts full financial responsibility for any such treatment. The parent / legal guardian also gives permission for any transportation required to a medical facility and assume full financial responsibility for said transportation.

Time Commitment:

- Training/Tournaments: Players must commit to and use their best efforts to attend any and all practices and tournaments as scheduled by individual teams and to follow and agree to obey the coaches' and officials' instructions regarding playing techniques, training and other team rules. Should any player be unable to attend a scheduled practice or tournament, the player or his/her parent/guardian is responsible for providing timely notice to the appropriate coaching staff member.
- Attendance at Team and Club Events: All players and their appropriate family members must commit to and use their best efforts to attend all team meetings and club events. Should any person be unable to attend any team meeting or club event, that person is solely responsible for obtaining any material or information presented at and complying with any procedures or policies announced at that meeting or event.

Financial Commitment:

Each player and his/her parent or legal guardian must commit to and pay the full tuition, either in full at time of registration or in payments. Because the team budgets rely solely on the financial commitments of its players, Empire United Soccer Academy will not refund any tuition monies or nullify any financial commitment unless good and sufficient cause is shown to the sole satisfaction of the Board of Directors of the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS.

This full tuition estimate and payments are identified on the payment page for this registration. In addition players and his/her parents are also responsible for any and all travel related expenses to all training sessions, team events and both home and away matches. The final tuition amount shall be determined by the Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Academy and shall be based upon the competition schedule of each individual team. You will be required to make an initial payment as identified at the end of this registration. Payment of the initial payment confirms your agreement to this Commitment

Policy. This initial tuition payment will be credited towards your obligation to pay the final full tuition amount.

Refund Policy:

It is the policy of EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, Inc. to refund registration fees only if your player moves more than 50 miles from his/her primary residence prior to the start of the season or if the player is unable to participate due to a season-ending injury or illness, as documented by a physician, in which case a partial refund will be granted based on the percentage of team training sessions and games that the player was able to participate in prior to the injury/illness. Refund requests due to injury or illness must be made within two weeks of knowledge of the extent of the injury or illness and must include a physician's note indicating that the player is physically unable to play. If Empire United Soccer Academy does not place a player on a team, a full refund can be issued.

No refunds, credits or fee transfers will be allowed for any other reason after the initial commitment payment is made by electronic payment or check. Conflicts with practice or game schedules are not grounds for a refund. There will be no reimbursements, refunds, or credits granted for games or other events due to weather, acts of God, or forfeits. If a player's Empire team qualifies for any last or post season events and that player is not going to be continuing with Empire during the following season, The club may decide that the player will not play in that event and the player is not entitled to any refund, reimbursement or credit.

Commitment Policy Conclusion:

If for any reason you do not wish to be bound by the terms of this Commitment Policy, please stop now and do not go any further with this registration. You and any players for whom you are a parent or legal guardian shall not be eligible for participation in any EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS program.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS – Tuition Payment Policy

All Players must be registered in the Club's registration/payment management system (Demosphere). Player insurance and registration, player profile information, club communications and Tuition Payment (defined as all monies due for individual participation equaling the sum of Club Costs plus Competition Cost – see defined components below) will all be managed through this on line resource.

Demosphere is set up to segment each player's total Tuition Payment into monthly installments. Each family will be responsible for making monthly payments for each individual player, as described below. Payments will be due at the beginning of each month, starting on July 1st, 2019. Monthly payment reminders will be sent out via email message.

A player's participation in team competitions and travel tournaments is dependent on being current with payment obligations. Players that have Tuition Payments made in full by the corresponding Payment Due Dates (noted below)

will be considered in good standing.

Players that are delinquent in Tuition Payments may continue to participate in training activities at the discretion of the coach/Club. The Club may secure that player's pass until their payment obligations are fulfilled. Once the payment obligations are fulfilled the player will be reinstated and eligible for team

competitions and travel tournaments. After February 15th, all reinstatements will require an accompanying Confession of Judgment (payment guarantee) to be signed for the remaining payments due.

If a player's financial obligation has not been met in full, that balance will be identified to NYSWYSA. That player's NYSWYSA status will be placed "In Bad Standing". They will be unable to participate in any NYSWYSA program (inside or outside of Empire Buffalo Stallions SA) until all financial obligations are fulfilled.

Tuition Payment Schedule Payment Due Dates

1st Payment due 7/1/2022

2nd Payment due 8/1/2022

3rd Payment due 9/1/2022

4th Payment due 10/1/2022

5th Payment due 11/1/2022

6th Payment due 12/1/2022

7th Payment due 1/15/2023

8th Payment due 2/15/2023

9th Payment due 3/15//2023

Summary of Club Costs):

Listed below are some of the different costs associated with the Club Costs and the Team Competition costs

including, but not limited to the following:

Club Costs:

- Fall, Winter/Indoor, and Spring Training Sessions
- Coaches Compensation (including payroll processing fees) and Coaches Education
- Membership Fees – Leagues, Associations, NYSW, USYSA, US Club and USSF Fees
- Risk Management and Background Checks
- Technical Staff Support (i.e. Executive Director, Director of Coaching, Associate Director of Coaching)
- Operations & Administrative Staff Support (i.e. Scheduling Coordinator, Finances, Registrar)
- Sponsorship, Scholarship/Financial Assistance, Discounts, Registrations, Fundraising, Misc.
- Club Marketing, Promotion & Communication
- Club and Player Insurance

- Facilities & Equipment (Improvements, Maintenance, Staffing/Supervision, Utilities, Services)

Team Competition Costs:

- League Event/competition registration fees
- Travel Tournament registration Fees
- Referee fees & scheduling fees
- Field/facility rental for scheduled games
- Coaching staff travel reimbursements
- Hotel/lodging, Rental car/vehicle reimbursement
- Gas & tolls, Meals, Airfare (as approved by the club)

Sibling Discount:

For Buffalo based teams (Under 9 – Under 19). Credits will be applied by Feb.15 as follows

- Two siblings in a household - 5% deducted from Club Cost portion of the Tuition Payment only
- Three or more siblings in a household - 10% deducted from Club Cost portion of the Tuition Payment only

Other discounts and credits:

Any miscellaneous tuition credits, prior year adjustments, sponsorships, fund raising, pro-rated tuition for late registration or other modifications should be included in the registration/payment management system by no later than February 15th.

USYSA National Championship (State Cup) & Tournaments:

USYSA National Championship tournament registration includes all registration and club fees to pay for the initial play-down game, the State Cup weekend and the Region 1 championship weekend. Teams will progress through each phase. If a team loses its play down game or does not progress to the Region 1 playoff weekend, the team should use the remaining fees to register for another tournament.

If events in a team's competition schedule are cancelled, those events should be replaced as unscheduled competitions cannot be credited back.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Conflict Resolution

Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club encourages our members to take a 24-hour "cool down" period before addressing a conflict that may have occurred. Complaints and concerns regarding your soccer experience should be directed according to the following guidelines.

Complaints regarding Empire Soccer Club coaches, assistant coaches, and/or managers should be addressed with the head coach. If resolution is not satisfactory, document your concern in writing to the attention of the appropriate program director.

Concern' regarding your child's team should be addressed directly with your child's coach or assistant coach at a proper time and place. If resolution is not satisfactory, document your concern in writing to the attention of the appropriate program director. If, after following the appropriate measures as listed above, and resolution is not satisfactory, document your concerns in writing to the attention of their Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club Director of Coaching Complaints and concerns regarding Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club's administrative policies should be documented in writing and sent to the attention of the Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Executive Director.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS – Coaches' Code of Conduct

Purpose: Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club strives for excellence on and off the field. While Empire Buffalo Stallions expects players to represent the club in a positive and professional manner, we expect coaches to adhere to the highest standards of behavior.

A coach or assistant coach should:

- Positively and professionally represent Empire Buffalo Stallions, my team and myself
- Promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship through my conduct
- Remain current on all required training and aspire to obtain the highest license possible to keep up with the

latest developments in coaching and the game of soccer

- Show no favoritism for one athlete over another on or off the field
- Refrain from public criticism of referee and opposing teams including coaches
- Endeavor to provide each player the opportunity for individual growth and development

A coach or assistant coach must:

- Be a positive role model – be trustworthy, show integrity and be responsible
- Show respect to officials, players, opposing coaches and the game of soccer
- Provide feedback to the players and/or parents every season or when asked, depending on the age of the player. The feedback may be done in person or in writing but providing feedback is an important part of the Empire Buffalo Stallions way.
- Recognize and address areas of misconduct including but not limited to bullying, hazing, harassment, emotional, physical or sexual misconduct or grooming.
- Put the safety and wellbeing of an individual player first
- Adhere to Safe sport guidelines for the proper boundaries between coaches and players
- Wear proper Empire Buffalo Stallions attire for all Empire practices, games and events

A coach or assistant coach must never:

- Use foul language or obscene gestures at a game or practice site while representing Empire Buffalo Stallions .

- Drink alcohol to excess or participate in any form of illegal substances defined by local, state and federal law –

whichever is most restrictive

- Consciously interfere with the relationship between player and parent(s). While coaches have a tremendous influence over players, parents are the ultimate authority over their children.

- Personally reach out to tournament officials regarding team placement in an event. All communication with tournament directors will go through the Director of Coaching

A coach or assistant coach understands that:

- Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in investigation, suspension, or full removal from duties

- Any soccer professional affiliated with Empire Buffalo Stallions must comply with all laws, as well as applicable rules, policies, procedures and regulations of EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, New York West, US Club, USYSA, and US Soccer. Coaches and assistant coaches are also responsible for enforcing these rules, policies, regulations, and procedures, including the philosophy of the club, with their Team.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Parent Code of Conduct

Youth soccer is for the players. All parents associated with the EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS are invited to share in the pleasure of watching their children participate in the world's most popular sport, so long as their behavior does not distract the players and officials from the free flow of play which is the trademark of the sport. Empire Buffalo Stallions prides ourselves on having respectful and engaged families, and we ask that parents and guardians continue to adhere to these guidelines.

A parent or guardian should:

- Foster an environment of respect for referees, players, coaches, and spectators of the opposing team through words of encouragement and support.

- Applaud superior play, effort, and sportsmanship by players on both sides.

- Support your coaches and managers consistently regardless of the results on the field. Coaches contribute many hours of their time to your children. They deserve congratulations when the team wins and your encouragement when the team doesn't.

- Communicate any concerns to the coach at the appropriate time (recommended 24 hour cool off period) away from the playing location and players.

- Always remain at least two yards from the playing field so our young players have room to play and enjoy the game.

- Your cooperation with these standards before, during and after each game or practice will make Empire Buffalo Stallions experience more enjoyable for everyone.

A parent or guardian must:

- Never use foul language or obscene gestures at a game or practice site.
- Avoid comments and gestures that express disagreement with referee decisions.
- Cooperate with any request by the game officials.
- Never consume alcoholic beverages on the field location at practices or games.

A parent or guardian understands that:

- Any parent or spectator who fails to adhere to these standards will be required to leave the playing area, and play will be suspended until he or she does so.
- Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer reserves the right to suspend or terminate a player's enrollment for his or her parent's persistent or extreme sideline behaviors, and there will be no refunds of player fee in such case.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for their guests' behavior and must inform their guests of the application rules of conduct.

Any breaches of this Code of Conduct can result in your child's suspension and a member's removal from the Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club. Comments and behavior of any member which contradict the mission statement or disrupt the functioning of a team can result in the suspension and/or removal from EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS – Personnel Communications & Social Media

Purpose: EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS strives for excellence on and off the field and recognizes that innovations in technology have changed the way and frequency in which coaches and team communicate. While Empire Buffalo Stallions expects players to represent the club in a positive and professional manner, we expect coaches and Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel to always adhere to the highest standard. This policy sets forth expectations with respect to communications (live, email, text, and all social media platforms) between Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel and teams/or player.

Coach and Empire Personnel Communication & Social Media Expectations:

- Communication between Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel and a minor or underage player must never be private. A private communication is defined as one that cannot be interrupted by another adult.
- Communication or conversation regarding illegal or age-inappropriate topics should never take place and is not permitted. This includes, but not limited to, drugs and alcohol use, sexually explicit language, or imagery, and any requests for players to comment on other player's appearance, attractiveness or general abilities.

- Do Not use Snap Chat (or any similar app that automatically deletes the content of a communication) to communicate with players.

Clarifying examples:

- When communicating with a player(s) via text or email, you should always ensure that there is at least one additional adult in the communication stream. Always include another Empire Buffalo Stallion-affiliated adult (coach or team manager), or the player's parent or legal guardian if necessary. If a player communicates to a coach privately, the coach should respond with including another adult in the communication stream as noted above.
- If communicating via any social media platform, ensure that the communication is public as no private channels are permitted.

Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel who are acting as a legal guardian (parent or legal guardian advanced approval) or in an emergency situation, are permitted to communicate privately but the topics should be kept professional in nature and be age appropriate.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Media Release Policy

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS reserves the right to use photographs, video, voice, and the likeness of players, parents, coaches, and referees participating in our programming without compensation. The media obtained by Empire Buffalo Stallions may be used on our website, social media, publications and etc. By participating in Empire Buffalo Stallions programs, members agree to the following statement:

I grant EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, Inc. and their respective successors and assign the perpetual worldwide and royalty-free rights to use my child's voice, photograph, and likeness in any media related to my performance in or observation of the club including, without limitation, a videotape recording of such programing without compensation to me, or my personal representatives, assigns, heirs, children, spouse and relative.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS – Travel Guidelines

Purpose: Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club strives for excellence on and off the field and acknowledges that traveling to games and tournaments is an important **PART OF BUILDING SUCCESSFUL TEAMS AND PLAYERS**. The travel guidelines below are intended to remind Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel of their responsibility to positively represent Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Academy, as well as to maintain the safety of everyone in our organization.

- Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel who are not acting as a legal guardian, shall not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated player who is a minor, absent emergency situations, unless agreed to by the minor player's parent or guardian in advance of travel.
- Any one-on-one or team meetings must be observable and interruptible and held in an open public space. If a private area is required, then it must be in the presence of another Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel member, team manager, or parent of one of the players.

- In some circumstances, Empire Buffalo Stallions leadership may require that Boys or Girls teams in same the same age group that are traveling to the same tournament or event be placed in separate hotels.
- While staying in the same hotel, Empire teams of opposite sex are permitted to have casual association in public spaces during free time, but absolutely no player will enter the rooms of players of the opposite sex unless the individuals are related.
- Empire Buffalo Stallions personnel must use good judgement when drinking alcohol at any club-sanctioned tournament or event. Drinking alcohol to excess or participating in any form of illegal substances (identified by local, state, and federal law – whichever is the most restrictive) is prohibited.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Guest Playing Outside the Club Policy

Players in the Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club must ask for permission from the appropriate director of coaching to participate in outside events with other clubs. The technical staff wants to make sure players are getting enough rest and are fulfilling the training to game ratio that has been set forth in the beginning of the year. To manage the players development and time on the field, the directors will approve or not approve the request. If the request is approved, the director will need to fill out a guest player paperwork and provide the player pass.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Non-Discrimination Policy

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS, Inc. does not discriminate against its members, players, coaches, parents, referees on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Anti-Bullying Policy

Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club is committed to providing players a fun, positive, and secure environment in which to learn and enjoy the game of soccer. We do not tolerate bullying at practice, game, or Empire sanctioned events. We will promote a telling atmosphere. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is taking place is expected to report the incident. Players and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Drug Policy

Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer has a zero-tolerance policy regarding the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco products at any Empire Buffalo Stallions event. We are a drug free organization at all times. For clarity, read the following guidelines:

- Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and drugs (including marijuana and misuse of prescription medication) are not permitted at an Empire Buffalo Stallions event, including practices, tournaments and league games.
- No Coach or volunteer shall participate in any Empire Buffalo Stallions activity while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Smoking or use of tobacco products is not permitted in or around youth sports practices or games.

EMPIRE BUFFALO STALLIONS - Lightning Policy

For Empire Buffalo Stallions Soccer Club, the safety of players and participants is of utmost importance. Soccer Fields can be a dangerous place during severe weather.

- You are in danger if you can see lightning
- You are in danger from lightning if you can hear thunder.
- Lightning often travels sideways as far as 10 miles and can strike away from rainfall even when skies are blue. In the event of a storm, games and/or practices must be stopped and suspended until the danger has passed using the following minimum criteria:
 - The sighting of a lightning flash or the hearing of the sound of thunder shall be reason enough to stop and suspend a game or a practice session.
 - Do not wait until it rains.
 - Do not try to reach the end of a quarter or end of the game.
 - Coaches shall take their players to a safe location upon suspension of a game and/or a practice session.
 - Following suspension of a game, the referees shall promptly leave the field to a safe location.
 - Play and/or practice shall not be resumed prior to 30-minutes after the last sighting of lightning or the last sound of thunder heard.

NOTE: Please refer to additional lightning safety found at the following site: USYSA – Lightning Safety Outdoors