

**IRISH SOCCER REFEREES SOCIETY  
CONSTITUTION**

*Effective from 11th December 2010*

## **1. NAME**

The name of the Society is: IRISH SOCCER REFEREES SOCIETY hereinafter 'the Society'.

## **2. OBJECTS AND FUNCTIONS**

- a) To watch over and promote the interests of referees in general.
- b) To improve the status of referees.
- c) To improve the standard of refereeing.
- d) To promote closer relationships between referees and football associations and bodies similar to the Society. To assist all such associations and bodies in promoting the best interests of association football at all levels.
- e) To assist other representative bodies of referees in their education and general work.
- f) To assist in maintaining a regular supply of referees.
- g) To establish new branches of the Society where none exist.
- h) To make such representations to any governing bodies as may be thought necessary for the good of the game and the benefit of referees and refereeing.
- i) To do such things as are conducive to the attainment of the objects herein before mentioned.

It is hereby expressly declared that each sub-clause of this clause shall be construed independently of the other sub-clauses hereof and that none of the objects mentioned in any sub-clause shall be deemed to be merely subsidiary to the objects mentioned in any other sub-clause.

## **3. BRANCHES**

- a) The Society shall consist of existing branches and any new branches that may be established in accordance with the objects of the Society. A new branch or branches may be established provided that such new branch or branches shall not be overly proximate, in the opinion of the Council, to the location of any branch or branches existing at the time and the establishment of any such new branch or branches shall be subject to the prior approval of the Council.
- b) Each branch shall consist of branch members who are, at the time, members of the Society and no person shall be entitled to be a branch member of more than one branch at any time. This clause is not to be construed as preventing the election of any Honorary Branch Member, hereafter referred to as life (non active) provided that such honorary branch member shall have paid on his behalf the affiliation fee by the Branch of which he is a member.
- c) In the event of a referee wishing to join a branch, and has previously been a member of another branch he must have clearance in writing from both branches and be ratified by council.
- d) Each branch shall be responsible for collecting from members, no later than the 31st of March of each year the Affiliation Fee, which fee shall be prescribed from time to time by the Council, for Membership of the Society and such fees as are collected, together with a list of members who have paid or on whose behalf a fee is paid, shall be paid to the Treasurer of the Society no later than the 31st of March of each year.

In relation to life (non-active) members a once-of fee, the amount of which shall be agreed from time to time by council, will be paid in the year that they become non-active. Existing life members are considered to have paid this fee.

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Non-payment shall render the member liable to be removed from the society Roll of Membership and the Branch liable to a fine and or suspension. Payment of the prescribed Affiliation Fee shall confirm that the member accepts and agrees to be bound by the rules of the Society. The fees collected shall remain throughout the property of the Society.

Any Branch that has not submitted its members Affiliation Fees by the 31st of March of each year to the Treasurer may be fined by Council.

- e) Nothing in sub-clause d) of this clause should be read so as to prevent each Branch from charging a Branch membership Fee.
- f) It shall be necessary, in order to remain a branch of the Society, for each branch to elect by secret ballot at an Annual General Meeting, to be held not later than the 30th of June of each year, a Chairman, an Honorary Secretary, a Treasurer and a Branch Committee and to inform in writing, within fourteen days of said Annual General Meeting, the General Secretary of the Society of the names and addresses of the individuals thereby elected and all notices must be sent to said addresses in order that they be deemed valid. In the event of the change of address of any branch officer the Branch shall inform the General Secretary of any such change and henceforth all notices shall be sent to such new address as are required by this constitution.
- g) Each branch shall, every three years or such other period of time as the Council may decide from time to time or upon the establishment of a new Branch, be entitled to elect one Delegate, from it's branch members for every 30 branch members, or part thereof, excluding life (non-active) members who are, at the time of the election of the delegate, branch members of the branch that elects the Delegate. And the elected Delegate shall hold office for three years or until he dies, resigns or is removed, by the Branch, from office at which stage the branch shall be entitled to elect a new Delegate.
- h) Each Branch shall elect it's Quota of Delegate(s) by simple majority at the branches Annual General Meeting and shall inform in writing, within fourteen days of said Annual General Meeting, the General Secretary of the Society of the names of the individual(s) thereby elected.
- i) In the event of a Branch delegate being elected as an officer of Council, the Branch may nominate a substitute delegate to represent the Branch. In the event of the substitute delegate attending Council meetings such substitute shall have a vote.
- j) Each Branch may adopt its own rules and regulations but these shall not be at variance with the Society's Constitution which takes precedence on all such issues.

### **4. MEMBERS**

- a) A member is an individual who:
  - i) Has had an affiliation fee paid on his behalf by his branch.
  - ii) Upon receipt of his Affiliation Fee from his Branch has had his name entered on the Society Roll Book of Membership for the applicable year.

The Council shall have the authority to remove from the Roll Book of Membership any member it considers to have brought the Society into disrepute, subject to the right of appeal in accordance with the rules of the Society and the F.A.I.

No member shall be eligible to act as a director of any association football club or to take part in the administration or management of any club, league or any other affiliated body to the Football Association of Ireland except where representing the Society and with the prior permission of Council.

## **5. THE PRESIDENT**

The Society shall have a President who shall act as Chairman and shall be an officer of the Council and shall be elected in accordance with clause 6b(ii).

### **6(a). ELIGIBILITY FOR POSITION OF PRESIDENT**

Every member of the Society of at least five years standing is eligible to seek election to the position of President and must be proposed and seconded by at least two branch members from different branches.

### **6(b). PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING PRESIDENT**

- i) Nominations for the position of President must arrive by registered post to the General Secretary not later than the 1st of February in the relevant year.
- ii) The General Secretary shall send to each Branch Secretary by 21st February the required number of voting papers together with the same number of sealable envelopes. If the Branch Secretary is a candidate in the election, he must notify the General Secretary of the name and address of another Branch Officer, to whom the election papers are to be sent.
- iii) If the General Secretary is a candidate all correspondence in connection with the election shall be handled by the Assistant General Secretary.
- iv) The election for President shall take place during the month of March in each relevant year at Branch General Meetings on a day or days selected by each branch.
- v) The President shall be elected by direct vote of the members.
- vi) Every member of society shall have the right to vote at an election for President.
- vii) The voting shall be by secret ballot and on the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote.
- viii) The votes when cast shall be sent by registered post to the returning officer, to be nominated by Council, to arrive not later than the 8th of April in the relevant year.
- ix) The returning officer shall appoint two current council members to act as scrutineers whose duty shall be to separately count and record the votes. In the event that the individual scrutineers results do not match the Returning officer shall order a recount until such stage as the results match.
- x) The returning officer shall communicate the result to each Branch Secretary and to each candidate not later than the 21st of April in the relevant year.
- xi) The returning officer shall hold the voting papers until the 21st of May following the election.
- xii) Each candidate shall be entitled to call for and attend a recount of the votes. A recount shall be initiated by the candidate sending to the returning officer by registered post a request for a recount, which request must be sent by the 28th of April. Any such recount shall take place prior to the 15th of May.

## **7. TENURE OF THE PRESIDENT**

- a) The President shall hold office for three years commencing at the first meeting of the Council of the new season, unless before the expiration of the three-year period he a) resigns b) dies or c) is suspended from office by a simple majority of the Council following a vote of no confidence in accordance with clause 13 (h) hereof
- b) The President may seek election for a maximum of two consecutive terms after which he must step down for one term before becoming eligible for office again.
- c) In the intervening period between election and the assumption of office of the new President the outgoing President shall continue to hold office and exercise the powers of the office but shall work closely with the newly elected President to ensure a smooth transition of office.

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- d) Any representative positions, which are held by virtue of the office of President of the Society and not in a personal capacity, shall be taken up by the incoming President upon his assumption of office.

## **8. POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT**

- a) The President shall have the power to act on his own initiative where necessary on any matter pertaining to the Society or its affairs provided that his proposed course of action is agreed to by at least three other officers of the Society and having consulted all the other Officers where practicable.
- b) Such act or actions by the President shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Council for ratification.

## **9. OFFICERS**

- a) The Officers of the Society shall be President, Vice President, The General Secretary, The Assistant General Secretary, The Treasurer and The Public Relations Officer all of which shall be Honorary positions.

## **10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- a) All Officers shall hold office for three years unless they resign die or are suspended from office. All Officers, other than the President shall be elected by the delegates in attendance at the first meeting of the season, of the Council in an election year.
- b) Nominees for the position of any officer must have been members of the previous Council and have attended at least fifty per cent of the meetings of the previous Council.
- c) Voting for each office shall be by simple majority of delegates in attendance, one vote per delegate, voting by secret ballot.
- d) Nominations, duly proposed and seconded by members of the Society of at least 12 months standing, must arrive by registered post to the General Secretary at least 28 days before the first meeting of the Council of the new season.
- e) Each branch shall be informed by the General Secretary of the name and addresses of the Officers of the Society not later than 21 days after their election and all notices must be sent to said addresses in order that they be deemed valid. In the event of the change of address of any officer the General Secretary shall inform each Branch of any such change and henceforth all notices shall be sent to such new address as are required by this constitution

## **11. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

In performing their duties as officers each officer shall act independently of their branch and in the best interests of the society as a whole.

- a) It shall be the duty of the President to act as chairperson at all Council meetings and to represent the Society at all meetings whereby a representative of the Society is required
- b) In the absence of the President all his powers and duties shall devolve to the Vice President.
- c) It shall be the duty of the General Secretary to: -
  - i) Attend all meetings of Council.
  - ii) Make and keep proper minutes of all meetings of Council.
  - iii) Keep and produce at all meetings of Council a copy of the constitution.
  - v) Attend to all matters relating to Society which from time to time be referred to him.
  - v) Issue to each Branch, within 30 days of each Council meeting minutes of said meeting.

- d) It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to: -
  - i) Keep an account of all monies received and expended by and due to the Society.
  - ii) Produce an annual Income and Expenditure account and details of all monies due to and payable by Society for each financial year ending 31st December; these accounts must be laid before a Council meeting before 31st March each year. The accounts may be subjected to audit by two members of society nominated by Council.
  - iii) Maintain the membership roll of the Society, in particular to update the roll as affiliation fees are paid and issue each branch with the annual updated membership roll. He shall further provide details of the membership roll to such bodies as request that information and are in his opinion proper recipients of that information.
- e) It shall be the duty of the Public Relations Officer to: -
  - Gain as much publicity as possible so as to assist the Society in its objectives and functions.

## **12. THE COUNCIL**

The Council shall consist of the Honorary Officers and Delegates.

## **13. MEETINGS OF COUNCIL**

- a) The Council shall meet not less than three times in the calendar year and otherwise as the Honorary Officers deem necessary and the first meeting of the new season (commencing 1st July) shall be held prior to the 30th of September in each year.
- b) Any two Branches may request in writing to the General Secretary the holding of a Council meeting and such meeting must be held within four weeks of such request.
- c) If in the reasonable opinion of the majority of the Officers of the Society (and for the purposes of this rule if there is a tied vote between them the Chairman shall have the deciding vote) the requested meeting has no valid purpose, then the Officers may insist that the Branches requesting the meeting pay all expenses incurred by the Council, or such part thereof as they consider reasonable, in the holding of the said meeting.
- d) Any seven Delegates to Council representing at least seven different branches, including at least one Officer, within 30 minutes of the appointed time, shall form a quorum to start the meeting.
- e) The General Secretary shall send notice of Council meetings to each Branch Secretary no later than 30 days before the holding of each meeting and it shall be the duty of each Branch Secretary to inform its Branch Delegates of the date and location of such meeting.
- f) The council has the power to abridge such notice in exceptional circumstances, provided at least one half of the elected Delegates are present and agree to such abridged notice.
- g) Each Branch shall be represented at every Council meeting by a minimum of one Delegate. Failure to comply with this clause will render the offending Branch liable to disciplinary action, which may include a fine, suspension and or exclusion from the Society.
- h) Notice of Motions: -
  - i) Each Branch and the Officer Board of the Society shall be entitled to forward a motion on any business relating to the Society for consideration at any meeting of Council.
  - ii) All Notices of Motions must be submitted to the General Secretary and received by him no later than 28 days before the meeting of Council at which it is proposed to consider the motion.

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- iii) The General Secretary shall no later than 21 days before the meeting of Council provide each branch with copies of all proposed motions to be considered at the council meeting.
- iv) The council has the power to abridge such notice in exceptional circumstances, provided that at least one half of the elected Delegates are present and agree to such abridged notice.
- v) Each motion must be seconded by another branch before a vote is taken in relation to the motion.
- vi) A motion shall be carried if a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote are in favour of the motion except where provided for elsewhere in the Constitution.
- vii) In the event of a tied vote rule 15 shall apply.

### **14. POWERS OF COUNCIL**

- a) The Council shall have the power to: -
  - i) Decide on all matters relating to the proper functioning of the Society and the upholding of the authority of Council.
  - ii) Elect representatives of the Society to such other bodies as required except to the positions on the Senior Council and Referee's Committee of the Football Association Ireland, Such positions being held automatically by the President of Society.
  - iii) Appoint sub-committees for such purposes and with such powers, including the power to co-opt, as they may deem necessary, but always provided at least one Honorary Officer is appointed to each sub-committee.
  - iv) Make provision for an examination of a Branch's finances, examine all books, records and papers and question any of the officers or branch members on their maintenance.

### **15. VOTING AT COUNCIL**

- a) Each Officer, except the President and each Delegate present shall have one vote and decisions shall be made by simple majority of those present and entitled to vote.
- b) In the event of a tied vote the Chairman shall have a deciding vote.

### **16. FINANCE**

- a) A current bank account should be used with a recognised banking institution in the state for the funds of the Society.
- b) The cheques of the Society shall be signed by two of the three signatories designated by Council on the nomination of the Treasurer one of whom shall be the Honorary Treasurer.
- c) The current account should not be overdrawn except where other funds are available to meet such amounts overdrawn
- d) The financial year shall run from 1st January to 31st December.
- e) Council shall have power to invest the Society funds in a non-speculative way as it sees
- f) Officers of Council and members of sub-committees of Council shall be entitled to receive from Council reasonable expenses and allowances necessarily incurred while on Council business. All such expenses shall be submitted to the Honorary Treasurer at no greater than quarterly intervals
- g) Branch(s), which seek the assistance of Council in relation to a Branch dispute, may be held responsible for all reasonable expenses incurred by the representatives of Council. If the Branch is held responsible it will pay to the Society the amount of the expenses incurred no later than 30 days after the expenses have been approved by Council

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## **17. DISCIPLINE**

In the event of an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct by a member of the society the alleged breach shall be investigated by and a decision shall be made by the member's home Branch using the following procedure:

- 1) The Member shall be notified in writing by registered post, of a date on which the member is to appear in front of the Branch /Disciplinary Committee for a hearing. The notice shall state the rule(s) alleged to have been breached. The member shall receive at least 14 days notice of this hearing. He will also be informed that he may have with him another society member of his choosing to assist or advise him at the meeting should he/she wish to do so. The costs of registered postage shall be levied on the referee(s) concerned should he/she be found guilty of the alleged breach of branch rules.
- 2) In the event that the member cannot for good reason attend on the date specified in the notice he shall contact the branch within fourteen days of his receipt of the notice to specially fix a date for the hearing suitable to all parties which date shall be within 14 days of the day originally scheduled for the hearing.
- 3) In the event that the member does not attend on the date specially fixed the case will be heard and concluded with in the member's absence. The member can present his case in writing.
- 4) The member concerned shall be notified by registered post, within 7 days of the hearing, of the findings of the Disciplinary Committee. The notice shall inform the member of his right to appeal the finding to an appeals subcommittee of the society.
- 5) The General Secretary shall be notified by registered post, within 7 days of the hearing, of the findings of the Disciplinary Committee
- 6) If a suspension from Irish Soccer Referees Society is involved and the member having exhausted all appeals procedure then the FAI Assessor(s), the local league secretary, the local match appointments officer(s), and the FAI (referees section) shall be notified by registered post, within 7 days of the hearing, of the findings of the Disciplinary Committee. `

## **18. APPEALS**

- a) A member may appeal a decision of a branch as follows:
  - i) The appeal shall be initiated by posting same by registered post to the General Secretary of the society within 14 days of receipt of the notice and
  - ii) The appeal shall be accompanied by a postal order/bankers draft, payable to I.S.R.S. for a fee as set by Council which shall be refunded only if the appeal is upheld and -
  - iii) The member shall also notify in writing the Branch Secretary, the local FAI assessor(s), the local match appointments officer, FAI referee section.
- b) On each occasion an appeal is lodged by any branch member against a decision of a branch, an appeals sub-committee shall be formed to hear and decide the appeal.
- c) Each appeals sub-committee shall consist of three members of Council, at least one of whom shall be an Officer of the Society. No member of Council shall be eligible to sit on an appeals sub-committee which is hearing an appeal from the branch of which that council member is a member.
- d) Decisions of the subcommittee shall be notified by the General Secretary to the appellant and his/her Branch in writing within 14 days of the decision being made. The notice shall inform the appellant and the Branch of the right, if any, to appeal the finding and the procedure for doing so.
- e) Decisions of the appeals sub-committee shall be notified to Council in the minutes of the Council meeting following the decision.
- f) All appeals must be made in accordance with the following conditions: ·
  - i) Appeals shall be made to the General Secretary within 14 days of written notification of the decision of the Branch.

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- ii) A copy of the appeal shall be sent to the Branch by the appellant.
- iii) All correspondence in relation to appeals shall be by registered post.
- iv) All appeals shall be acknowledged within 14 days of receipt of same by the General Secretary.
- v) All appeals shall be heard within 30 days of receipt by the General Secretary
- g) The appeals subcommittee shall elect a Chairman from amongst its members.
- h) All appeals must be accompanied by a postal order or bank draft with the appropriate fee which will be returned if the appeal is successful.
- i) All decisions of the appeals sub-committee may be appealed to the FAI Appeal Board subject to that body's rules.

### **19. HONORARY LIFE VICE PRESIDENT**

The Council may from time to time confer the position of Honorary Life Vice—President on members of long standing in the society.

### **20 ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

1. This Constitution may be revoked, altered or added to by the following procedure
  - a) All motions to amend the Constitution of the I.S.R.S. to be lodged with the Honorary Secretary on or before August 1st each year.
  - b) All motions to amend the Constitution of the I.S.R.S. to be proposed by the sponsoring branch/executive at the first council meeting of the new season.
  - c) The branch/executive submitting the motion to amend the Constitution of the I.S.R.S. must be present at that meeting to propose the motion.
  - d) Each branch shall convene a meeting or meetings to allow its members to vote on the motion(s) to amend the Constitution of the I.S.R.S. as agreed to be sent out by council of I.S.R.S. within 60 days of the first council meeting of the season.
  - e) The voting shall be by secret ballot, and voting papers with the motion(s) to be sent out to branch secretaries within 21 days by registered post.
  - f) A two-thirds majority of the votes cast will be required for a motion to be carried.
  - g) Each branch shall return the results of the votes within seven days of the vote taking place to the Honorary Secretary of the I.S.R.S. by registered post.
  - h) each branch shall retain all the ballot papers and shall return all the ballot papers at the second meeting of council.
  - i) The Honorary Secretary I.S.R.S. shall in the presence of a witness count the returns and distribute the results to each branch secretary within 14 days.
  - j) The result of the vote will be notified at the second council meeting of the season.
2. Any changes to the Constitution shall have effect from the end of the council meeting at which they were adopted unless the council decides otherwise.

### **21. DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY**

- a) The Society may be dissolved at any time by consent of five-sixths of the membership of the Society present and voting at a meeting duly convened for that purpose by Council.
- b) The assets or liabilities of the Society at the date of dissolution shall be divided amongst the members of the Society at the date of dissolution.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Members shall, both on and off the field of play, behave in a manner which would enhance and promote the good name and status of their fellow members.
2. Members shall adhere to the Football Association of Ireland's 'Rules and codes of conduct, FIFA, UEFA Rules and- Directives', and to the Constitution of the Society and to the rules and instructions of their respective branches.
3. Members shall generally refrain from conduct which would be considered as unbecoming of their fellow members.
4. Members are required to wear the current designated society dress code when attending:
  - a) Any social function in an official capacity
  - b) Council meetings of the society and when officiating at matches where three or more officials are appointed.
5. On receipt of a match appointment members shall:
  - a) If unable to fulfil the appointment the member shall contact the appointing offices as soon as possible and advise of same.
  - b) Read the instructions carefully and liaise with the other match officials if any.
  - c) Be present at the designated venue a minimum of thirty minutes before kick off time and where three or more officials are appointed a minimum of forty minutes is recommended or as instructed by the official in charge.
  - d) Behave in a courteous manner.
  - e) Perform and have carried out all pre-match inspections, checks and instructions which are normal good custom and practice for the relevant level and grade of competition.
  - f) Ensure that all post match requirements are strictly adhered to and fulfilled.
  - g) Return the appointment documentation as required by the league or affiliate.
6. At all times the member shall ensure that the other match officials on any match at which the member is officiating are members of the society, in all other circumstances the prior permission of the local branch should be sought.