

2021 / 2022
HHOHHO REGIONAL FOOTBALL
LEAGUES

RULES
AND
REGULATIONS

Compiled and Presented by
THE HHOHHO REGIONAL FOOTBALL
ASSOCIATION

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Approved by

HRFA Executive Committee

On the 10th March 2022



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PREAMBLE

In conformity with the requirements of the management of competitions within its realms as per the statutes and its regulatory frameworks, the Executive Committee has drawn these exceptional rules and regulations for the administration and management of the Regional League competition for the 2021/2022 football season.

The Regional League competition shall be managed and administered by the Hhohho Regional Football Association through its League Competitions Committee. The Competitions Committee being a standing committee of the Hhohho Regional Football Association Executive Committee is entrusted with the implementation of the rules and regulations governing the competition and the organization of the competition.

This document lays out the Rules and Regulations for the administration and management of the Regional League (*hereafter referred to as the Rules*). These Regulations for the 2021/2022 season have been customized to embrace and incorporate the regulations developed to address the COVID-19 pandemic ("COVID-19 Protocols") as prescribed by the relevant authorities in the governance of football domestically and internationally and the pertinent government and health authorities. The COVID-19 Protocols are set out in the annex to these Rules and either supplement or, if expressly indicated, replace the existing regulations and will remain in effect for as long as they are considered appropriate. Due to the continuously evolving understanding of COVID-19, including effective and appropriate methods to reduce the risk and severity of infection, EFA may modify or supplement the COVID-19 Protocols at any time, including by way of issuing a modified version of these Regulations. Any regulations, circulars, directives and decisions issued by EFA or other document intended to modify or supplement the COVID-19 Protocols shall be binding on the Regional Association and its members.

All Football Clubs/Teams participating in the Regional League) competition shall undertake to observe and be bound by these Rules and any regulations, circulars, directives and decisions issued to modify the COVID-19 Protocols.

The Regional League competition shall be competed for by the teams in the A and /or B division of the Regional League.

The implementation of these rules and regulations is subject to any regulations that may be promulgated by the EFA from time to time with respect to the principle of promotions and relegation and any applicable regulations on Club Licensing.

ARTICLE 1: Definitions

The following terms denote the following as may be consistently used in this document:

1. **FIFA:** Federation Internationale de Football Association
2. **EFA:** Eswatini Football Association
3. **IFAB:** International Football Association Board
4. **DC:** The Protest and Disciplinary Committee.
5. **HRFA:** Hhohho Regional Football Association
6. **REC:** Regional Executive Committee
7. **RFL:** Regional Football League
8. **Official:**
 - a. Any member of the Match Supervisors or Competitions Committee of the Regional League **OR**
 - b. Any person designated by the Regional Executive Committee (REC) to act in its capacity for match supervision e.g. a match commissioner, match supervisor, stadium representative, etc. **OR**
 - c. Any member of the REC, the Hhohho Regional Football Association (HRFA) Office and its Standing and/or Ad-hoc committees.
9. **A Match Commissioner / Match Official:** The person appointed to have sole authority for ensuring that a match is officiated according to the rules laid down in this document who is responsible for preparing a report of the match and to forward same to the relevant authorities in terms of these rules.
10. **Defaulter:** A player who is not eligible to play in a particular game for any reason such as;
 - a. suspension, expulsion, improper registration, double registration, or
 - b. registered with more than one football club,
 - c. unregistered,
 - d. Declared ineligible in accordance with the regulations in force, etc.
 - e. Any player as defined, shall be considered a defaulter if his name appears on the team list presented to the match officials at checking point for that particular game **OR** shall be considered a defaulter if he has played in the game in question.

11. **Free agent:** A player who is registering for the first time; or who has not been registered in the past 30 months; or who is deregistered, or whose football club/team has been expelled or is defunct.
12. **Player:** any football player licensed by an association.
13. **International player:** A player who is transferring from another association in the membership of FIFA into the territory of the EFA. International players shall be allowed to register with a RFL club upon production of a valid Clearance, a valid International Transfer Certificate (*ITC*), a valid contract (*where applicable*) with the football club he intends to join, duly signed Registration Form, Medical Certificate (*where applicable*) and two passport sized photos. However the player can only play on production of a valid work permit. In the case of students, a study or student permit shall be required instead of a work permit.
14. **Unsporting Behaviour and Misconduct:**
 - a. An improper registration of a player(s), double registration, and fielding of a defaulter; **OR**
 - b. Invading the field of play, throwing of any object(s) into the field of play or its surrounding or unto persons thus assaulting or attempting to assault, use of threatening words, and physical manhandling with intent to assault or to cause bodily harm; **OR**
 - c. Uttering abusive or obscene or derogatory words, spitting or emission of saliva onto a person or directed towards a person, use of provocative or insulting hand gestures/signals, and includes any incitement, conspiracy or attempt to engage in an act to bring football into disrepute; **OR**
 - d. Failure by the football club(s) to control their official(s) or player(s) or supporter(s) or fan(s); **OR**
 - e. Disregard of the Statutes of the HRFA and rules governing this competition. It also includes disobedience of instruction by; the HRFA Official; Match Commissioner or Referee or the Stadium Representative

ARTICLE 2: Affiliation and Playing Season

1. All RFL clubs shall be affiliated to the HRFA by paying an annual affiliation fee of Six Hundred Emalangi (E600-00) as determined by the HRFA.
2. Such affiliation fee shall be paid on or before the first registration of players or the last working day before the start of a competition from that football club for the season.
3. The club shall also be expected to pay any other fees with regards to their participation in the football season under the league, as determined by the HRFA,

4. The playing season and registration periods shall be determined by the EFA.
5. The EFA has issued other complementary and supplementary mandatory requirements that shall be observed on the registration of clubs and players as contained in **Circular No. 172**; contents of which shall be observed in full for the 2021/2022 season.

ARTICLE 3: Registration, Registration Periods and Transfer of Players, including officials

1. All players shall be registered exclusively with the HRFA electronically in line with the regulations, decisions and or directives as may be issued by the EFA, in terms of the prevailing regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players and any other Club, Coach or Officials licensing regulations as directed by the EFA, from time to time.
2. The fee for registration for the 2021/2022 football season shall be **E50.00** per player, which shall be exclusively paid with the HRFA. *This also includes coaches of the League teams who shall also have License cards for the 2021/2022 season.*
3. Each club shall be entitled to register up to a maximum of thirty (30) players, including a maximum of up to five (5) foreign players.
 - a) This shall be subject to restrictions, as may be pronounced from time to time by the EFA in line with FIFA regulations.

- b) If the number of players exceeds 30, the extra player(s) shall not be registered unless some players in the existing list are transferred to other clubs or are deregistered to conform to the maximum of 30.
 - c) The deregistration of a player shall be made in writing by the club wishing to deregister a player, expressing the status of the player, the reasons for deregistration and citing conformity with the conditions as stipulated in the provisions of these rules.
 - d) Deregistered players shall be declared free to join football clubs of their choice, unless they are still contracted, wherein the club shall be expected to honour their contracts or terminate their contracts to allow the player to transfer to another club.
4. All players wishing to register shall fill in their registration forms which should be accompanied by certified copies of their National ID's and coloured Passport sized photos on a white background before they are eligible for registration. Failure to comply will result in that player not being registered.
 5. On completion of a registration, a player will be issued with a registration card bearing his coloured photograph, player's particulars and the HRFA Secretary's signature.
 6. The registration card shall bear the players identity number and players' HRFA card number.
 7. The registration card remains the property of the association hence tampering with the card is strictly prohibited. If found to have tampered or committed such an offence, the club or player shall be summarily fined not less than two hundred (E200.00) emalangen and the card will be confiscated by the office.

The Registration periods for the 2021/2022 season are:

- a) The First Window Registration Period commences from the 13th September 2021 and closes on the 19th November 2021;
- b) The Second Window Registration Period commences from the 7th March 2022 and closes on the 1st April 2022.

9) If a player transfers to a new club, the new club shall be expected to have in its possession the following documents (duly completed) for the purpose of registration:

- a) **A signed resignation letter by the player who intends changing teams (where applicable).**
- b) **A written clearance from his previous club**
- c) **A player's registration Form from his new club.**
- d) **A player's registration Form from his previous club.**
- e) **A player's registration card from his previous club.**
- f) **Transfer Certificate from the registration office**
- g) **International transfer certificate (in case of an international player)**
- h) **In case of a missing card or any documentation, a validated affidavit must be made.**
- i) **Loan agreements (where applicable)**
- j) **Contract between a player and club (where applicable)**
- k) **Any other documentation in terms of the requirements of the club, coach and officials licensing system as may be communicated by the EFA from time to time.**
- l) **A Work Permit or Temporary Work Permit or Study/Student Permit in the case of a student (where applicable).**
- m) **In case of a New Registration; there shall be a declaration that the player in question is a free agent, accompanying the above stated requirements, where they are applicable.**

10. The transfer of an International player from FIFA affiliated Associations shall be in accordance with the FIFA Regulations for the status and transfer of players as may be communicated, by the EFA from time to time.

11. A player may be allowed up to a maximum of three (3) transfers per season but can only play for up to a maximum of two teams per season.

12. A player may be allowed to transfer twice only in the main registration period (First Window Registration Period), however, such is allowed on condition the player has not featured in an official match of the club. Should the player feature in an official match, the transfer to another club shall not be allowed, until the next registration window period (i.e. if the player and club still wish to implement the said transfer).

A maximum of only one transfer may be allowed in the Second Window Registration Period. This is principally not the main window registration period hence one transfer shall be allowed on both players and clubs.

Loaning of amateur players is strictly prohibited (*i.e. it shall not be allowed*) in terms of the Status and Transfer of Players. Amateur players are only subject to a full transfer, with loaning of players only restricted to professional players (*i.e. players on contract*).

13. If a player and/or club are found to have made false declarations on registration, both the player and the club shall be charged with misconduct and if found guilty, the player shall be suspended for not less than six official matches, and the club

shall be fined not less than One Thousand Emalangeni (**E1, 000.00**).

14. Any player not fulfilling the requirements of registration outlined above; in Article 3 (9) shall not be considered a registered player, thus a defaulter.

a) Any club fielding a defaulter shall, upon protest by the Opposing team, be found guilty of misconduct and shall be liable to **lose the game forfeiting three points and three goals to the opposing club and shall further be fined not less than E1, 000.00 (One Thousand Emalangeni) payable within 21 days.**

b) The offending player may be suspended for **six (6) official matches** unless it can be proven on balance of probabilities that he did not directly contribute to his being a defaulter.

15. All teams participating in the RFL shall be obliged to have registered junior teams under the junior leagues structure being either the **Under 13, Under 15 and Under 17** junior leagues prior to commencement of league matches *(if not yet available in the HRFA, at the beginning of the season when they fall due or at any time as may be determined by the EFA and/or HRFA).*

ARTICLE 4: Participation in the Competition

1. All participating Team Delegation Members shall also fully comply with these Regulations and the Regulations stipulated under the COVID-19 Protocol, the Match Protocol and any other COVID-19-related requirements or instructions issued by FIFA, CAF and EFA, whether in circular letters or in any other documents.
 - a. In order for a player to play, the player must produce a proof of vaccination or a proof of a negative test conducted, as prescribed by EFA and in accordance with the provision of the COVID-19 protocols must be provided for every match in order for a team delegation member to enter the match stadium and remain in the premises on match day. This shall apply to all the members of the teams' delegation that will have access to Zone 1 and Zone 2 of the match venue or stadium.
 - b. All other teams' delegation members who shall not have complied with this provision, shall if being a part of the total allowable maximum of a delegation of 30 members, even if he/she were to serve in an official capacity for his/her team in the discharge of the match not be allowed to enter in Zone 1 and Zone 2 but instead be ushered to enter in Zone 3, where match participants who do not qualify to enter into Zone 1 or Zone 2 be allocated.
2. Unless otherwise stated in these rules and regulations, each participating football club/team hosting a match and on entering to participate in the competition shall automatically undertake to and shall be responsible for amongst other things:
 - a. Guaranteeing, planning and implementing law and order as well as safety and security in stadiums and other relevant locations in conjunction with the relevant authorities. The applicable stadium safety and security regulations shall apply;
 - b. Ensuring that all measures taken in relation to team travel, transport, accommodation (where applicable), logistics, match preparation and the match itself are in line with the requirements set by the relevant authority(ies) and government;
 - c. Appoint a COVID-19 Compliance Officer over and above the Team Doctor in accordance with the COVID-19 regulations and applicable COVID-19 protocols as prescribed by EFA.
 - d. Completing the football specific COVID-19 screening tools, having at least three (3) consecutive days screening of all the delegation members, as mandated by the COVID-19 regulations or protocols and submitting it to the relevant EFA and Regional Association authority.
3. The competition shall be played on a one legged league with clubs playing each other home or away basis.
4. The club shown first on each fixture on the left shall be home or host club.
5. Each match shall last ninety (90) minutes, as stated down in the FIFA Laws of the Game.

6. Points for the competition shall be awarded as follows-:
 - a) Three (3) points for a win
 - b) One(1) point for a draw
 - c) Zero (0) points for a loss
7. It shall be the sole prerogative of the office to prepare, approve and amend fixtures of matches.
8. The office shall prepare a schedule of fixtures, which shall contain: the dates of matches, venues where matches are to be played and starting times of such matches.
9. The office shall prepare and make available the schedule of fixtures to club officials not later than **two (2) working** days before the date of such scheduled matches.
10. It shall be the duty and sole responsibility of all teams to collect their schedule of fixtures. Failure to collect a fixture shall not exonerate a club or team from sanction in the case it arrives late or fails to honour a match.
11. The office may in certain circumstances change or reschedule the fixture. Clubs affected by these changes shall be informed of a revised or amended fixture in writing, electronically or telephonically through the General Secretary or any designated member. Clubs shall be obliged to collect the amended fixture.
12. Clubs affected by any amended fixtures shall be informed not later than two (2) working days before the date at which the matches are to be played.
13. The referee/match commissioner/official(s) shall conduct a pre-match inspection of facilities including the pitch, dressing rooms if any, (where applicable) at least sixty (60) minutes before the schedule commencement of a match with the hosting club.

14. It shall be the duty of the hosting club to make sure that its Home ground is lined or marked properly, has soccer nets and in good and playable condition.
15. The host club shall ensure that its home/host ground Marked/lined properly, in good and playable condition with soccer nets at least 60 (sixty) minutes before the schedule kick off time of the match.
16. Failure to comply with **the provisions** above, the referee shall call off the match and the hosting team or club shall be subjected to a disciplinary hearing and if found guilty it shall forfeit the match with three (3) points and three (3) goals awarded to the visiting team and further fined a sum of not less than E 500.00 by the EFA DC.
17. The last three matches of the round fixtures will be scheduled by the CC in its sole discretion. However all other timelines on communicating fixtures to teams still hold, as defined in these rules, depending on the state and to safeguard the integrity of the competition, the period of controlled fixture may be extended such that it starts earlier than that.

ARTICLE 5: Starting Times of Matches

1. Each club shall report to the designated official at the venue of the match at least sixty (60) minutes before the schedule start of the match.
2. Each club shall be at the card checking point twenty (20) minutes before the schedule start the match. The official shall inform the clubs of any delay and inform them of the new card checking time.
3. Failure of a club to respond as in 1 and 2 above shall result in a summary fine of not less than **E 200.00**
4. The card checking point shall normally be the dressing rooms of the stadiums in the absence of dressing rooms the match official shall determine the checking point. It shall be deemed an offence for the club to ignore or not follow the instructions of the match official on this matter. Any club found guilty of contravening this rule shall be summarily fined not less than **E 200.00.**
5. Each club shall pay an officiating fee of **E75 - 00** before the start of the card checking process,(the breakdown of the amount E70 -00 being officials' fee and the E5-00 shall be for the fee to paid towards fumigation officer who shall fumigate the goal posts before the start and at the intervals of the match.
6. Each registered club shall have two sets of contrasting uniforms in its registered colours so as to effect change in case of colour clashes. The visiting or away club shall be required to change uniform in case of colour clashes.

7. Failure by a visiting team to effect a colour change in its uniform within 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the match will result in the match being called off. The offending club shall if found guilty forfeit the match with three (3) points and three (3) goals awarded to the opposing club and be fined not less than E500.00.
8. Each club shall bring two (2) size five (5) FIFA approved soccer balls at the commencement of the game. The referee will choose one of the two balls for use in the match. The other balls will be kept in custody of the ball retrievers spread around the playing ground until the match is over.
 - a) Failure to provide the soccer balls by a club shall render the club to a summary fine of **E 200.00 (two hundred emalangeneni only)**.
 - b) If a match is abandoned due to a team's failure to provide soccer balls that are fit to play; the offending team will be charged for causing the abandonment of the match and if found guilty will be fined not less than **E500.00** and will further forfeit the game to the opposing team with 3 points and 3 goals awarded to the opposing team.
9. Any club reporting between one (1) minute and fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled starting time of the match shall be summarily fined a sum of three hundred (E300.00).
10. Any club reporting more than fifteen minutes (15) after the schedule starting time or not at all, shall result in the match being called off and the offending club be liable to disciplinary action and if found guilty shall forfeit the match to the opposing club, as well as three (3) points and three (3) goals. The club shall be fined an amount of not less than one thousand (E1000.00) emalangeneni.
11. Any club entering the field of play other than through the official entrance shall be liable to a fine of two hundred emalangeneni (E 200.00)
12. Any club entering the stadium/dressing rooms other than the designated points of entry shall be guilty of an misconduct and shall be summarily fined one thousand emalangeneni (E1000.00)
13. Any club "walking out" or refusing to play a match, or causing abandonment of a match shall if found guilty shall lose the match, with three (3) points and three (3) goals awarded to their opponents, and a fine of not less than E 1,000.00 (one thousand emalangeneni) imposed on them.
14. The referee's report and/or that of the match official shall be conclusive proof as to which club abandoned or caused the abandonment of the match.

14. A club which fails to honour three (3) matches shall be summoned to appear before the disciplinary committee and if it fails will be automatically suspended from participating in all activities until it appears before the executive.

ARTICLE 6: The Match Officials and Play

1. The referees committee shall appoint match officials for all matches.
2. The match officials shall report at the venue of the match at which they are officiating at least ninety minutes (90) before the scheduled start of the match. In the event that one or two of the referees failing to show up, the present match official shall appoint substitute referees.
3. The report of the match officials shall be conclusive prove to the time of referees arrival. The referees scheduled for this match shall be subject to disciplinary conduct in terms of the referee's code of conduct.
4. If 30 (thirty) minutes after the schedule start of the match, all referees fail to arrive, and the match commissioner or supervisor cannot provide substitute referees, he/she shall call off the match. The referees scheduled for this match shall be subject to disciplinary conduct in terms of the referee's code of conduct.
5. No club shall refuse a referee that has been assigned to officiate a match. A club that refuses shall be subjected to disciplinary action and if found guilty shall forfeit the match, and be liable to a fine of not less than one thousand (E1000.00) emalangeneni.
6. Each club shall pay an officiating fee of Seventy- five Emalangeneni (E75 – 00) before the start of the card checking process.
7. The match officials and the club captains shall before the match inspect the teams and check registration cards of participating players. The match commissioner and the referees shall lead the clubs into the field of play.
8. **Under no circumstances shall the match officials allow a player or any other person from the participating clubs who according to the Laws of the Game and these rules, are not allowed into the field of play. The offending parties shall be charged and hauled before the DC.**
9. **Under no circumstances shall the match officials allow a player or the whole club without the player's identity cards into the field of play. The offending parties shall be charged and hauled before the DC.**
10. In addition to the above, a player to be registered and play football under the auspices of the Regional Association and EFA, must have complied with the Covid-19 protocols as prescribed by EFA and/or relevant authorities, regulations, directives and decisions, as amended from time to time. All players shall be accredited by the Regional Association and/or EFA in line with the Covid-19 protocol, as may be amended from time to time.

11. Only players who have vaccinated or those who (*if not vaccinated*) comply with and pass the testing requirements within the timelines stipulated in the COVID-19 regulations and match protocols as they relate to the COVID- 19 pandemic (*negative test result*) are considered eligible.

- a) In this regard, a COVID-19 negative test result is compulsory for all players to be eligible to participate at the start of the season, at the point of their first match if they had not yet been registered at the start of the season, and at any given timelines where COVID-19 testing has been scheduled.

Players who do not fulfill these provisions are automatically disqualified, hence are not eligible to participate in matches of this competition and any participating football club/team that violates these provisions shall be summarily fined E1 000 for each player having violated these provisions.

- b) In view of the COVID-19 regulations, in particular the implementation of matches during the COVID-19 induced environment, the following scenarios shall apply where a player or member of a team delegation has tested positive:

- i. As a principle, all COVID-19 positive cases will be isolated or quarantined in terms of the prevailing COVID-19 Protocols, as prescribed by government and/or pertinent health authorities;
- ii. Where less than ten (10) players have tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19 positive test), the affected players will be isolated or quarantined in terms of the COVID- 19 protocols with the match continuing to play as scheduled;
- iii. Where at least ten players have been discovered to have tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19 positive test), the scheduled match shall be postponed and played at a later date, as will be determined by the competition organizers;
- iv. A positive COVID-19 test for a team delegation member, other than (a) player(s), does not warrant a scheduled match to be postponed, unless it is established that the number of positive tests of such members are at least five (5) and that such members were in close contact with the players and/or team delegation qualifying to enter into Zone 1 and Zone 2 of the match venue.

12. Any player whose identity is questionable and continues to play, shall be expected to take a photo with the match official (referee/match commissioner/match supervisor) together with the captain of the team whose identity is in question. This photo shall be taken to the office for verification and if upon verification, the player is found guilty, the player's club shall forfeit the match with three (3) points and three (3) goals and a fine of not less than one thousand (E1, 000.00) emalangeni.

13. The referee may allow the team a period of warm up, if time and circumstances permit.

14. A team shall not exceed a maximum of five (5) substitutes in a match.

- a) During a match each team has a maximum of three (3) opportunities to substitute,
- b) A substitution made at halftime shall not be counted amongst the three opportunities, provided the maximum of five substitutes have not been exhausted.

15. The referee and match commissioner/match supervisor shall at the end of the match each compile a match report for the office.

16. The following details should be included in the report:

- a) Name of the Competition.
- b) Date, and venue of matches.
- c) Name of the referee and assistants.
- d) Names of the clubs
- e) Names of the captains
- f) Times of the start, half time and full time.
- g) Half time and full time scores.
- h) Substitutes used.
- i) Any event, which the referee and/or the match commissioner consider to be disciplinable conduct in terms of these rules and / or the constitution of HRFA, other than one warranting only a yellow card and a reprimand / caution.
- j) Name and signature of the referee
- k) Misconduct of players leading to caution or expulsion of such players.
- l) Unsporting behaviour of officials, supporters and/or fans and actual utterances used in case of insults.
- m) Number of goals scored by each club as well as the names of players and/or their jersey numbers.
- n) Cards, both yellow and red issued to any player.
- o) Any protest, objections and complaints lodged by the clubs
- p) Number of substitutes introduced by each club.

17. Without restricting the generality of the afore-going paragraph, the event noted shall include the following particulars:

- a) the name (s) / officials (s) / fan (s) member (s)
- b) the jersey and card numbers
- c) actual utterances constituting the offence
- d) Any object used during the commission of such disciplinable conduct.
- e) Any act constituting the reprehensible conduct.
- f) The time in which the conduct occurred.

18. The referee's report and /or that of the match commissioner shall reach the office within two working days and it shall provide conclusive proof pertaining to any circumstance (s) regarding the match.
19. Any referee that fails to submit his/her report within the period as stated in article 5.18 above shall have his/her allowance reduced by half.
20. The laws of the game shall be those currently in force and as published by IFAB.

ARTICLE 7: Serious Player's / Club's Misconduct

1. Any player who is sent off from the field of play after being issued with a red card before the start of the match, during the course of the match and after the match shall automatically be suspended from participating in the next succeeding official match, and may further be subjected to disciplinary action
2. A player who received a red card will automatically have his registration card withdrawn and forwarded to the office. The officiating referee shall be responsible to collect the player's registration card and submit it to the office with his match report.
3. A registration card, taken or confiscated by the office on account of 2 above, will only be returned after completion of the period of suspension to his club upon payment of the retrieval fee of **E50.00** to the bank account and an authentic bank deposit slip is produced to the office.
4. Once a player has accumulated three (3) red cards in the same Season, he **shall be liable to disciplinary action and may be fined up to a maximum of E1, 000, unless the three (3) red cards are a result of assault or violent conduct where the player may be suspended for the rest of the season.**
5. It is the responsibility of each club, and not the office, to ensure that all players are eligible to play in this competition and in any tournament (s) organized by the **Regional Association**. Any club contravening this rule shall be prosecuted and if the team is found guilty, it shall be fined a minimum of five hundred (**E 500.00**) **emalangeni**.
6. Notwithstanding any provision in these rules, the office reserves the right to charge any player and / or team that contravenes the rule regarding the playing of defaulting players, with the appropriate penalties/fines being invoked if the player and / or team is found guilty of the offence.
7. Any club fielding a suspended player shall lose the match in which the suspended player featured. Such a case shall be referred to the disciplinary committee and if

found guilty may take disciplinary action against the club and the player concerned. If found guilty the club may be fined not less than E1, 000.00, with the player liable to a possible suspension of not less than six (6) official matches.

ARTICLE 8: Other Unsporting Behaviour

1. Any club whose member(s), player(s), or fan(s) or officials engage in unsporting or violent behaviour either before, during or after a match shall be guilty of misconduct and be liable to punishment.
2. Members, players, officials or fans include the following:
 - a) Any person (s) wearing articles of a colour of the offending club, e.g. scarf, badge, etc.
 - b) Any person who is seated at a stand or section of a stadium or ground, which is occupied by the followers of the offending club when the offence is committed.
 - c) Any person known by the match officials to be a supporter, official or fan of one of the clubs.
 - d) Any person who commits the offence in furtherance or support of the offending club's interest or favour.
 - e) Clubs are expected to post marshals to control their crowds. These marshals should police the proceedings and submit any offender to be the police for criminal prosecutions if they misbehave. Such incidents must be brought to the attention of the match official to serve as a mitigating factor in the event the said team is charged for misbehaviour of its supporters.
 - f) No club is however, allowed to post guards /marshals at the dressing rooms and such conduct is liable for disciplinary action.
 - g) It shall be the duty of all officials, clubs and match officials to report to the office cases of misconduct likely to bring the game or administration thereof into disrepute.

3. The following shall be the punishment for those found to be guilty:

TYPES OF MISCONDUCT		FIRST OFFENDER	SECOND OFFENDER	THIRD OFFENDER
a)	Invading field of play	Summary fine E200.00 or a suspended sentence	Summary fine E300.00	Summary fine E600.00
b)	Throwing objects of any kind onto the field of play	Minimum fine of E 1000.00	E2000-00	E2000 fine and suspension for three games.
c)	Insulting the referee, HRFA official, opposing player(s), fan(s)/team-mates/supporters	Minimum fine of E 1000.00	E2500	E2000 fine and suspension for three games
d)	Threatening to assault the referee, the HRFA official, opposing player(s), fans/team-mates/supporters.	Minimum fine of E 1000.00	E2500	E2000 fine and suspension for three games
e)	Attempting to assault the ref, HRFA official, opposing player(s), fan(s)/ team-mates/supporters	E 1500.00 fine	E2000.00	Maximum fine of E 2,500.00 and further forfeit three (3) points and three (3) goals from the
f)	Assaulting the match official, opposing team's player(s), teammates/officials, fan(s)/supporter(s)/member(s)/referee/ match commissioner	Minimum of E3,000.00 and in addition the club may be ordered to compensate the victim for any loss incurred as a result of the assault and ii) The offending player(s), official(s) or fan(s) shall be suspended for a period of not less than six (6) months	iv) E5000 fine. Suspension of not less than 6 months v) The offending player(s), official(s) or fan(s) shall be suspended for a period of not less than twelve (12) months	vi) E10,000, Suspension of not less than 12 months vii) The offending player(s), official(s) or fan(s) shall be banned from all football activities in the country through
g)	Sprinkling of any substance that is believed to command	Summary fine of E1000-00	Summary fine of E2000-00	Summary fine of E3000-00
h)	Unbecoming behaviour, attempting to act or acting to bring football into disrepute	Minimum of E1,000	Minimum of E2,000	Minimum of E3,000 plus suspension

ARTICLE 9: Protest, Disciplinary Cases, Appeals and Fees

1. Any protest regarding defaulters must be lodged with the referee before the start of the match or at the time the player is introduced into the field of play. The protest must be countersigned by both captains, and acknowledged by the referee, otherwise it shall be null and void. The referee shall take the player's card protested about and submit it to the office. The office shall photocopy the card and return it to the club for the next game.
2. Any other protest shall be lodged with the referee at the time of occurrence otherwise it shall be null and void.
3. **Confirmation of a protest plus supporting evidence** must reach the secretary of the office not later than 48 hours, excluding Saturday, Sunday and public holidays after the match. A **non-refundable** protest fee amounting to Five hundred (E 500.00) Emalangeni shall accompany the confirmation.
4. Failure to confirm the protest within the stipulated time, the club shall be summarily fined a sum of One thousand (E1000.00) Emalangeni. Payable within twenty one (21) days.
5. The DC shall have power to consider and deal with the protest lodged by an individual club or league and make necessary decisions.
6. Parties at a protest shall be afforded an opportunity to present an opportunity to present their case when the protest is being heard, and shall receive at least two working days' notice before the hearing.
7. A party summoned to attend a hearing before the DC shall receive a notice at least two working days before the hearing and shall have a representation of its choice.
8. The Regional Association may subpoena any party under its jurisdiction and/or request the office to subpoena such a person to give evidence at the hearing.
9. A party not satisfied with the verdict of the DC may appeal to the Eswatini Football Association's Appeals Committee. Such an Appeal shall be lodged within **five (5)** working days on receipt of a written verdict. A non-refundable fee amounting to **E 2,000.00** (*paid exclusively with the EFA*) must accompany the appeal.

10. The DC shall have power to sit over a case even if the other party is not represented, if the DC is satisfied that such party was informed of the date, time and venue of hearing. The decision of the DC shall be binding to all parties.

11. In the event that a party has been properly served with the notice to sit for a hearing and the matter has to be postponed due to the party's unavailability, the DC is empowered to order the said party to pay the costs related to the postponement of the case; that includes the sitting and travelling allowances of all concerned or in the event a club requests for postponement.
 - a) Such costs shall be calculated by the office and shall be payable to the office within seven (7) calendar days unless the next sitting has been set within a period less than the 7 days where the payment shall be made before the next sitting.
 - b) In the event the party having requested for the postponement fails to pay within the stipulated timeframe; the case shall proceed with the club fined not less than E1, 000.00 in addition to the costs in question.

12. A club which shall need to produce evidence from the office or any other EFA Member shall do so through the office and shall request such in writing.

13. Any club that has been found guilty shall pay all costs of the hearing (e.g. *DC sitting, prosecutors and travelling expenses*).

14. All clubs shall be expected to collect their written verdict from the office.

15. Any team that fails to attend any meeting shall be liable to the following fines:
 - a) Regional meeting - E 200.00
 - b) Quarterly meeting and annual general meeting - E 400.00
 - c) Sponsorship Launching and Presentation -E400-00

ARTICLE 10: Hhohho FA Cup Participation and other HRFA competitions

1. The log position at the end of the league shall be used to determine the top two clubs that will be eligible to participate in the Hhohho FA Cup if it is available.
2. In a case where the league would not have been achieved or finished, due to unforeseen circumstances, the teams occupying the first and second log positions on the log as at the time stipulated by the organizers; will be eligible to represent the regional league in the Hhohho FA Cup, provided
all teams have played equal number of games or the lower teams i.e. 3rd and below, cannot be in a position to surpass or match the top two teams even if they would have played a fewer number of matches.
3. Any other HRFA competition(s) that may become available shall be determined in accordance with the directives of the HRFA, especially if it is of a national nature.

ARTICLE 11: League Positions, Relegation and Promotion of Clubs

League Positions

1. a) The number of points accumulated at the end of the league shall determine positions in this competition. The final and officially completed log shall be binding on all clubs and officials, and will be used for the purpose of resolving disputes that should arise due to any unforeseen circumstances. A copy of the final and complete log shall be sent to all clubs by the HRFA.

b) The football club accumulating the most points on completion of the league shall be at the top of the log and declared the winner. This is subject to any regulations that may be promulgated by the EFA with respect to the principle of promotions and relegation and applicable regulations on Club Licensing.
2. In the case of equality of points between clubs, positions in the log will be determined by the following criteria;
 - a) the club with Greater number of points obtained in the matches between the concerned teams shall be a the top.
 - b) If a) above is not decisive ,the club with the best goal difference in the matches between the concerned teams shall be declared the winner;
 - c) If both a) & b) above are not decisive, the club with greater number of goals

scored in the matches between the concerned teams shall be at the top.

3. In the case of the failure of 2 above, the positions on the log will be determined by the best goal difference in the log.
4. If 2 and 3 above are not decisive, the club having scored the most goals in the log shall be declared the winner.
5. If 2, 3 and 4 fail to produce a clear position, and then a play-off match which shall proceed straight to penalties, if the game ends in a draw in regulation time (90 minutes) shall

be played by the contesting clubs to determine the winner at a neutral venue.

The relegation of football teams from the Promotion Leagues/Division shall be determined as follows:

- a) Normally, (*when there is no relegation from the Super League*), the bottom two teams in the Promotion League Final Log standing will be relegated to the B Division.
- b) However, all relegations shall be determined by the number of clubs/teams that are relegated from the HRFA Super League. If there are more teams relegated from the Super League, more teams will be relegated to the B division.
- c) There shall be not more than 16 clubs in the promotion division in the 2022/2023 Football season.

7. **In the double streamed leagues**, the topping clubs in each stream shall be engaged in a mini playoffs matches which shall be played in a home and away format where at the end of the last match if the result of both matches end is a draw the away goal rules shall be considered in declaring the winners.
If the away goal rule is not decisive at the end of the second match the teams shall go straight to the penalty shootouts.

8. The promotion of a football team from the Regional League to the Regional super League shall be determined as follows:

- a. The topping club in the promotion division shall engage in the HRFA Regional Play-offs and shall pay a sum of E600.00 to the HRFA (as a participating fee for play-offs).
- b. The two topping teams in the B Division shall be promoted to the Promotion Division.
- c. If the topping team in (a) above qualifies to be promoted to the super league, the team occupying the third position in the B division shall be promoted to the Promotion division to bring the total number of teams to 16.
- d. If there are more slots to be filled in the Promotion Division, more clubs shall be promoted from the B Division i.e. third placed on final log.

ARTICLE 12: Prizes and Awards (Sponsored Leagues)

Prizes and Awards, in sponsored leagues of the HRFA, shall be implemented in terms of the agreements entered into between the HRFA and the relevant sponsors and/or partners. In a case where the agreements do not provide for such, the REC will determine the implementation of the prizes and awards.

ARTICLE 13: Press Statement and Reports

1. Each club shall be responsible for advertising its matches through the media. Clubs shall furnish the office with names, addresses, email addresses and contact telephone and fax numbers of two (2) persons who shall act in this capacity. Clubs that do not adequately advertise their matches shall face disciplinary action from the office.
2. The office shall be entitled to publish in the press, or in any other media, reports of activities related to the Hhohho Regional Football Association.
3. Clubs and/or clubs officials shall not publish or make statements that may bring the Hhohho Regional Football Association, Regional Executive Committee, and its subcommittees into disrepute. Anyone or any club that commits this offence shall be brought before the DC for disciplinary action. If found guilty the person(s) or club shall be fined an amount not less than **E 3,000.00**.

ARTICLE 14: General

1. Entrance fees at all matches shall be between E 10.00 and E20-00. Children will be made to pay half the price, while those that are below 12 years of age shall gain free entry.
2. The office shall collect the stadium fee and 20% of the gross gate taking from all matches played in this tournament, unless otherwise decided by the Regional Football Association.
3. Clubs shall always provide change amounting to E200.00 (Two hundred emalangeneni) for all matches in E10, E5 denominations. Any team that fails to bring the change or arrive with it later than thirty (30) minutes before the starting time of the match or first game (*in case of a double header*), shall an amount equivalent to 25% of the gate taking due to the club deducted. This amount shall be shared equally between the office and fixtured football team(s), excluding the offending club.
4. Each club shall provide a reasonable number of people to collect gate takings in all their fixture games. These gate men and women shall arrive at the stadium at least two hours before the start of the game. In the event that a team does not provide the gate personnel, the official officiating at the stadium will employ such personnel and their allowances deducted from the net takings due to the net offending team(s).
5. All participating teams shall attend the launching and prize presentation ceremonies of any sponsor of the league.
 - a. If a team fails to attend any one of the occasion, shall forfeit E200.00 of its prize money to HRFA in each occasion.
 - b. In the event a team failing to attend both occasions, shall forfeit all its prize money to the HRFA.
6. In the event of any dispute or conflict arising between any rules of this competition, the Regional Association's Statutes and/or the EFA Statutes and regulations in as far as that particular matter of conflict is concerned, shall take precedence.

ARTICLE 15: MISCELLANEOUS

1. Any team that fails to pay certain fees/fines within the stipulated time shall be suspended and any suspended team shall not participate in all activities organized by the HRFA.
 - a) Games which will be fixtured during the course of the team's suspension will be awarded to their opponents i.e. suspended team will lose the game to the opposing team.
 - b) If after three (3) games the team still fails to pay it will be summoned to appear before the REC and if still fails it will be expelled from being an affiliate of the HRFA after the final decision has been taken by the HRFA.
2. If two teams are fixtured against each other while they are both suspended; they will both lose the game i.e. three (3) points and three (3) goals thrown away.
3. Any club that fails to pay their fines within the stipulated time of 21 days after pronouncement of the verdict shall be officially suspended from all activities of the HRFA. It remains the sole responsibility of any team to collect their correspondence from the office.
4. All correspondence to the office must be written on the teams letterheads, otherwise it is not official and cannot be accepted.
5. Any team writing their team list on any paper other than the team's letterheads or League's letterheads shall be summarily fined **E 250.00** by the office.
6. Any changes to be made on the office bearers should be accompanied by minutes of a meeting that was held where the said officials were elected.
7. Any changes can be made within **72 hours** before the team can appear before the Regional Executive Committee.
8. It shall be the responsibility of every club to collect correspondence from the office.
9. Any club shall be expected to sign summons in the office in case they have committed an offence sanctioning that club to appear before the Executive Committee or subcommittees.

10. All payments due to the office shall be deposited to the Regional Associations Bank Account(s) held at **Standard Bank Mbabane Branch account No: 911 00 000 73337**
 - a) All teams are therefore directed to utilize the HRFA Bank Account as directed by the HRFA, and no other bank shall be allowed.
 - b) After making a deposit, the team should proceed to the HRFA office with the stamped bank deposit slip where they will be furnished with a receipt by the secretary/treasurer as acknowledgement of payment/deposit.
11. The fixtures of the competition as well as the matches organized by the Competitions Committee and all data related to them are subject to a "copyright" reserved to the HRFA.
12. If for any reason whatsoever, a team withdraws from the competition or does not report for a match except in cases of force majeure accepted by the Competitions Committee, or if it refuses to play or leaves the ground before the regular end of the match without the authorization of the referee, it shall be considered a loser and shall be eliminated for good from the competition. Further measures may be adopted by the REC.
13. The implementation of these rules and regulations is subject to any regulations that may be promulgated by the EFA from time to time with respect to the principle of promotions and relegation and any applicable regulations on Club Licensing.

ARTICLE 16: COVID-19 REGULATIONS

1. All participating clubs have to ensure that they :-
 - a. have systems in place that identify, assess, eliminate (where possible) manage and monitor risks of contracting corona virus within football activity
 - b. Provide a safe environment that complies with all the safety measures advocated by WHO and Eswatini Ministry of Health related to COVID-19.
2. PRE -MATCH MEDICAL ASSEMENT COMPLIANCE
 - a. Every match day there shall be screening of every player and officials involved on the day.
 - b. Screening sheet report of the clubs' preceding days shall be submitted to the match official 3hrs before the game failure which there's a summary fine of E2 000:00
 - c. Temperature screening shall be done before entrance to the dressing rooms or designated area and any red flag shall require immediate isolation.
 - d. Sanitizers must be mounted at the entrance and nearby behind the substitution

benches.

STADIUM COMPLIANCE

- e. Frequently used guard rails, turnstiles, door handles, change rooms (all surfaces, including benches, cupboards, floors and shower floors) must be regularly cleaned – preferably with soap and water or 70% alcohol cleaning material – and must be dried appropriately.
- f. The cleaning or disinfecting of **goal posts** must also be done just before teams warm ups, before the match and half time
- g. The number of people to be in the stadium should not be more than what EFA / Government Covid-19 Rules stipulate unless otherwise EFA has given an authority of the number to be allowed.

3. TEAM COMPLIANCE

- a. Each Club's Chief Covid-19 Officer is responsible for, and must, alert the club and the League should there be any "red flagged" players/staff, players under investigation or diagnosed with COVID-19. Personal information does not have to be shared, but the Club name and the individual's designation at the Club must be

4. FIELD COMPLIANCE

- a. All medical response staff (including team doctors and physiotherapists) must wear masks and gloves at all times
- b. It is the responsibility of all (and in particular each player) to ensure that players drink from their own water bottles at all times
- c. Benches/chairs must also be cleaned, following the same cleaning protocols as applicable to change rooms.
- d. All match balls will be cleaned with sanitizer prior to the match, half time and after match.
- e. No minor ball boys will be utilized during matches. The home team must provide four adult "ball retrievers" per match and will be part of the team.
- f. Spitting and shouting in close proximity to other players or official in the field of play is discouraged.

ARTICLE 17: MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR

Matters not provided for in the present rules and regulations and in terms of Article 14 (6) shall be decided by the Competitions Committee. The Competitions Committee's decision shall be final and binding to all parties.

ARTICLE 18: ADOPTION

The present rules and regulations have been adopted and approved by the HRFA on the 10th March 2022 and come into force on the same 10th March 2022.

Chairman
Nigel Shongwe


General Secretary
Nkosingihile Shongwe
