



REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ADMISSION OF FOOTBALL ASSOCIATIONS

2019 Edition





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DEFINITIONS

In interpreting these Regulations, all terms defined within the Definitions section of the most recently adopted AFC Statutes and all terms whose meaning can be derived within the context of the AFC Statutes shall have the same meaning within these Regulations.

For the purposes of these Regulations, and provided the context so permits:

- (a) the singular shall include the plural and vice-versa;
- (b) the feminine gender shall include the masculine and vice-versa;
- (c) reference to natural persons shall include any legal person or corporation;
- (d) all defined terms unless otherwise stated herein shall bear the same meaning as described in the AFC Statutes, unless the context indicates otherwise.

CHAPTER ONE: REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ADMISSION OF FOOTBALL ASSOCIATIONS

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These Regulations govern the process:
 - 1.1.1. for Football Associations to be admitted to the AFC; and
 - 1.1.2. for Football Associations who hold “Associate Membership” of the AFC to be granted “Ordinary Membership”.
- 1.2. Any Football Association seeking admission to the AFC or reclassification of its AFC membership must submit an application that contains detailed information on its organisation, its sporting infrastructure and its territory.
- 1.3. Only one (1) Football Association shall be officially recognised by the AFC in each country or territory.
- 1.4. In compliance with Article 7.3 of the AFC Statutes, any Football Association that is situated in another continent may only be admitted to membership if it is not a member of any other Confederation and its admission is in accordance with the FIFA Statutes.
- 1.5. These Regulations shall not affect any application for membership that is pending at the time of their enactment.
- 1.6. These Regulations and all related policies, directives, decisions, guidelines, and circulars issued by the AFC shall be binding upon all Member Associations.
- 1.7. Any reference to the AFC Statutes and to AFC and FIFA regulations refer to those valid at the time of application.

CHAPTER TWO: APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO THE AFC

2. Application for Admission

- 2.1. All applications for membership shall be submitted on the prescribed form set out at **Appendix A**. The application may be for “Ordinary Membership” or “Associate Membership” in accordance with Articles 7.6 and 8 of the AFC Statutes.
- 2.2. Upon receipt of an application, the AFC General Secretariat shall notify the AFC Associations Committee and AFC Executive Committee in writing of the application.
- 2.3. Three (3) copies of the application for admission must be provided to the AFC General Secretariat. Applications may be submitted to the AFC General Secretariat by any means of communication deemed appropriate. At least one (1) copy of the application should be submitted to the AFC in hard copy with originally-executed documents and reports.
- 2.4. The AFC General Secretariat shall verify the completeness of the application. If it determines that the application is not complete, the application shall be returned to the applicant with a deadline for submitting a revised application with notice of the missing documents. The applicant must submit a full application within twelve (12) months of the initial submission to the AFC. If the applicant fails to do so, the application will be rejected and the applicant may submit no further applications in the twelve (12) months following the rejection of the application.
- 2.5. Any application not submitted on the prescribed form shall be deemed invalid.

3. Content of Application

- 3.1. The application for admission shall be made in three (3) copies and must contain all documents and reports requested within this Article. All documents and reports must be originals and be signed and/or initialed by the respective officers of the Football Association.
- 3.2. The application must contain the documents set out in the categories identified in **Appendix B**.

CHAPTER THREE: APPLICATION FOR RECLASSIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP

4. Application for Reclassification

- 4.1. All applications for reclassification of membership shall be submitted on the prescribed form set out at **Appendix A**. Any Football Association holding “Associate Membership” may submit an application in writing to the AFC General Secretariat that their membership be reclassified to “Ordinary Membership”.
- 4.2. Three (3) copies of the application for reclassification must be provided to the AFC General Secretariat. Applications may be submitted to the AFC General Secretariat by any means of communication deemed appropriate. At least one (1) copy of the application should be submitted to the AFC in hard copy with originally-executed documents and reports.
- 4.3. The AFC General Secretariat shall verify the validity of the application for reclassification. In order for an application to be valid, the applicant must have completed a minimum period of two (2) years as an “Associate” member (the “**Threshold Criteria**”).
- 4.4. Should the Threshold Criteria not be met, the AFC General Secretariat shall communicate to the applicant that its application is invalid. The applicant may resubmit the application at any time upon satisfying the Threshold Criteria.
- 4.5. Should the Threshold Criteria be met, the AFC General Secretariat shall notify the AFC Association Committee and the AFC Executive Committee of the application.
- 4.6. Any application not submitted on the prescribed form shall be deemed invalid.

5. Content of Application

- 5.1. The application for reclassification must contain all documents and reports requested within this Article. All documents and reports must be originals and be signed and/or initialed by the authorised officers of the Football Association.
- 5.2. The application must contain the following documents:
 - 5.2.1. an updated report on the administrative activities of the Football Association encompassing any changes to the administrative matters previously provided to the AFC pursuant to Article 3.2 of these Regulations; and
 - 5.2.2. an updated report on the technical activities of the Football Association, encompassing any changes to the technical matters previously provided to the AFC pursuant to Article 3.2 of these Regulations.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURE

6. General Responsibilities

- 6.1. The AFC General Secretariat shall process all applications for admission or reclassification.

7. Inspections

- 7.1. The AFC General Secretariat may visit the applicant at any time to conduct inspections.
- 7.2. In such circumstances, the applicant shall provide the necessary support.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1. The AFC may request additional information and documents from the applicant at any stage during the application procedure.

9. Final Report

- 9.1. The AFC General Secretariat shall produce a Final Report, which will be provided to the applicant and the AFC Associations Committee.
- 9.2. The Final Report shall provide a recommendation to the AFC Associations Committee. This recommendation is not binding upon the AFC Associations Committee.

10. Decision

- 10.1. The AFC Associations Committee shall only take into account the content of the Final Report when making its decision or recommendation.
- 10.2. Provision of the documents and reports set out in these Regulations does not automatically grant the applicant the right to admission or reclassification of membership.

- 10.3. The decision or recommendation of the AFC Associations Committee must be presented to the AFC Executive Committee for decision. Only decisions of the AFC Executive Committee are appealable in accordance with the AFC Statutes.
- 10.4. In accordance with the AFC Statutes:
- 10.4.1. if the AFC Executive Committee admits the applicant as an 'Associate' member, such membership shall commence immediately;
 - 10.4.2. if the AFC Executive Committee recommends to admit or reclassify the applicant as an 'Ordinary' member, such recommendation shall be made at the subsequent AFC Congress. The applicant shall have the right to state the reasons for its case to the AFC Congress; and
 - 10.4.3. if the AFC Congress decides to admit or reclassify the applicant, such membership shall commence immediately.
- 10.5. In the case of admission or reclassification, the conditions, rights, and obligations of such membership shall accord with the AFC Statutes.
- 10.6. In the case of non-admission or non-reclassification, the applicant is barred from resubmitting an application for a period of twelve (12) months from the date that the decision to dismiss the application was made.

CHAPTER FIVE: ADMINISTRATION

11. Taxes and Duties

- 11.1. Applicant Football Associations and Member Associations are responsible for the payment of all taxes, duties, and other charges payable in relation to the implementation of these Regulations.

12. Fees and Expenses

- 12.1. Applicant Football Associations and Member Associations are responsible for the payment of all fees and expenses in relation to the implementation of these Regulations.
- 12.2. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes all professional (legal, accounting etc), banking, and monetary exchange costs.

13. Disciplinary Measures

- 13.1. All disciplinary measures in relation to these Regulations shall be undertaken in accordance with the current AFC Statutes, AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, and any relevant AFC circular.

14. Decisions

- 14.1. All decisions made in accordance with these Regulations, except where expressly identified otherwise, are final and binding and not appealable in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

15. Amendments

- 15.1. The AFC reserves the right to make amendments to any part of these Regulations for any reason whatsoever. Such amendments shall be duly communicated in due course.

16. Force Majeure

16.1. The AFC Associations Committee is the only body capable of declaring a Force Majeure event pursuant to these Regulations.

17. Matters Not Provided For

17.1. Matters not provided for in these Regulations shall be decided by the AFC Associations Committee. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

18. Closing Provisions

18.1. The AFC General Secretariat is entrusted with the operational management of applications pursuant to these Regulations and is therefore entitled to make decisions and adopt the detailed provisions necessary for implementing these Regulations.

19. Enforcement

19.1. These Regulations were ratified by the AFC Executive Committee on 1 December 2019 in Hong Kong and come into force immediately.

For the AFC Executive Committee

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
President

Dato' Windsor John
General Secretary

FORM FOR APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION OR RECLASSIFICATION

This form shall be submitted as the cover page for any application for admission to the AFC or application for reclassification of membership of the AFC.

Name of Football Association:

Country or Territory:

Admission or Reclassification:

Type of Membership:
(Associate or Ordinary)

No. Pages of Application:

By signing this form, the applicant Football Association acknowledges that:

- a) its application shall be governed by the most recent version of the AFC Statutes and the Regulations Governing the Admission of Football Associations;
- b) it shall not be reimbursed for any part or the entirety of its costs and expenses incurred in the application process;
- c) the submission of its application does not create any legal relationship with the AFC, nor does it constitute any form of offer or create any contractual rights;
- d) the provision of all mandatory documents and reports does not grant an automatic right of admission or reclassification.

The undersigned have executed this Form having been duly granted the authority by the applicant Football Association:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Name:

Position:

Date:

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

1. Football Association

- a) documents that demonstrate that the applicant represents a country or territory in accordance with Article 7.2 of the AFC Statutes;
- b) documents that demonstrate that the applicant organises and supervises football in its country or territory in accordance with Article 7.2 of the AFC Statutes;
- c) documents detailing the applicant's standing as a sports organisation under the law of the country (e.g. state constitution, extracts from relevant state laws or directives, receipt of state subsidies, member of state umbrella organisation for sport), that its bodies are designated in independent elections, and a list of persons elected to serve on the applicant's bodies, specifying those who are authorised signatories with the right to enter into legally binding agreements with the AFC;
- d) (if applicable) a letter from the applicant's previous or geographically-related Confederation stating that it has no objection to the applicant's application;
- e) documents that outline the internal organisation of the applicant (e.g. organisational chart, employee job descriptions, etc);
- f) documents detailing the administrative infrastructure of the applicant (e.g. location of headquarters, distribution of property, postal address, contact details by telephone, telefax, and electronic mail, website address, etc);
- g) a copy of the minutes of its last two (2) congresses or constitutional meetings;
- h) a copy of the financial statements and auditor report of the last two (2) financial years; and
- i) a copy of the applicant's legally valid Statutes and regulations.

2. Country or territory Information

- a) a report on the political, economic, and social structures in the applicant's country or territory;
- b) a report on the accommodation facilities in possible venues for away teams, officials, supporters, media representatives, and other guests from abroad;
- c) a report on the national transport network (e.g. national and international airports, national rail system, bus network, etc); and
- d) a report on the visa application process and list of requirements to be complied with for individuals traveling to the country or territory in order to be granted a visa.

3. Football within the country or territory

- a) a report on the sporting infrastructure in the applicant's country or territory, setting out the:
 - (i) number and type of football pitches (natural or artificial turf) that can host football training sessions;
 - (ii) number of football stadiums with a capacity greater than 3,000 (with or without floodlights);
 - (iii) number of football stadiums that could host international matches in accordance with the relevant AFC Regulations; and
 - (iv) number of football pitches that can (or do) host matches in the applicant's domestic league championship.
- b) a report on the number of registered and active players (men and women), in the following categories:
 - (i) professional;
 - (ii) amateur;
 - (iii) veteran; and
 - (iv) youth.
- c) a report on the number of clubs registered with the applicant, setting out the:
 - (i) number with professional players;
 - (ii) number with amateur players; and
 - (iii) number with youth (10-20 years of age) players.
- d) a report on the competitions (professional and amateur) organised by, and affiliated to, the applicant. Significant weight should be placed on providing information regarding the professional game, including finances;
- e) a report on the referees registered with the applicant, which contains the basic training and further education provided (if any);
- f) a report on the coaches and instructors registered with the applicant, which contains the basic training and further education provided (if any);
- g) a report on the representative teams that could represent the applicant in official tournaments organised by the AFC; and
- h) any other information and documents relevant to evaluate the application.

4. Declarations

- a) a declaration that it will always comply with the Statutes, Regulations, Directives and Decisions of the AFC, and of FIFA;
- b) a declaration that it will comply with the Laws Of The Game at all times;
- c) a declaration that it recognises the jurisdiction of the CAS, as specified in the AFC Statutes;
- d) a declaration to the effect that the legal composition of the applicant guarantees that it can make decisions independently of any external entity; and
- e) a declaration that it recognises the right of the AFC in controlling matches and competitions between Football Association teams and between Leagues and/or Club teams from different Member Associations in the AFC territory.



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