



SAFF Electoral Code

1444 A.H - 2022 A.D

Disclaimer: the official and binding language of the [Electoral Code] is Arabic. This English-language translation is provided as a guide and is for informational purposes only. In the event of any discrepancy between this version and the binding Arabic version, the latter shall prevail.

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Chapter I: Definitions

Article (1): Definitions:

For the purpose of this Code, the following terms and expressions shall have the meanings set respectively opposite thereto unless the context requires otherwise. A reference to the singular shall apply to the plural and vice versa.

Kingdom	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
SAFF	Saudi Arabian Football Federation.
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association (International Federation of Association Football). Asian Football Confederation.
AFC	The legislative body and the supreme authority in SAFF.
General Assembly	SAFF Executive Authority.
Board of Directors	SAFF Administrative Authority.
Secretariat General	The executive director of the General Secretariat of SAFF.
Secretary General	SAFF Statutes.
Statutes	SAFF Election Code
Code	SAFF General Assembly members.
Members	SAFF General Assembly members.
Elections	The means by which the General Assembly members select the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman and the Members of SAFF Board of Directors.
Electoral Committee	The body responsible for organizing and supervising elections and the procedures of approval thereof at SAFF level.
Electoral Round	The four years period that starts on the date when SAFF's Board of Directors takes up its works.
Election Process	The set of executive rounds for SAFF elections.
Election Period	The period taken by SAFF elections.
Voter	SAFF General Assembly member.
Candidate	Each person who has met the conditions set forth in the Statutes and this Code to be included in an electoral list.
Voter List	A list composed of persons who have the right to vote in elections.

Electoral List	A list composed of eleven (11) candidates for the Board of Directors, namely the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman and Board members who are elected together.
Ballot	Voters' cast of their votes to select the electoral lists.
Ballot Paper	A card or any other technical means by which the voter evidences the name of the person selected from the electoral lists.
Ballot Date	The date determined for the ballot.
Saudi Sport Arbitration Center	The judicial body that has the exclusive jurisdiction over hearing and/or adjudicating and/or mediating in all sports disputes and/or disputes related to sports after exhaustion of all internal channels of appeal within SAFF according to these Statutes and its regulations.

Chapter II: Scope of Code Application and Election Principles

Article (2): Scope of Code Application:

Without prejudice to the provisions of the Statutes, this Code shall constitute the main reference for the election of SAFF Chairman of the Board of Directors and govern the procedures of the Electoral Committee.

Article (3): Principles of the Election Process:

Elections shall be held based on compliance with the following principles:

1. Independence of elections according to the principle of separation between authorities adopted by SAFF;
2. Transparency in the practice of the election process;
3. Ensuring that the members exercise their rights to select the Electoral List;
4. Announcing the elections in the available mass media;
5. No interference from any external authority other than FIFA; and
6. The Electoral Committee shall base all of its judgments on the Statutes of SAFF and relevant laws and regulations of AFC and FIFA.

Chapter III: Electoral Committees

Article (4): Electoral Committee:

1. The Electoral Committee members shall be appointed according to the provisions of the Statutes.
2. The Electoral Committee shall organize and oversee all rounds of elections of Board of Directors and issue relevant decisions.

Article (5): Formation of the Electoral Committee:

1. The Electoral Committee shall comprise the chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of the Disciplinary and Ethics Committee and the Appeals Committee at SAFF.

2. If a member is unwilling to perform his duties, or the position is vacant, he shall be replaced with the eldest member in the committee he works for (i.e. Disciplinary and Ethics Committee or Appeals Committee) until exhaustion of all members in such member committee.
3. If there are no members in the Disciplinary and Ethics Committee or the Appeals Committee, the Board of Directors shall appoint members of the Electoral Committee. One of the members must have obtained at least a Bachelor's Degree in Law or an equivalent thereof, and they shall be approved by the General Assembly.
4. The Electoral Committee shall comprise:
 - a) The chairperson.
 - b) 3 members.
 - c) Members of the Electoral Committee shall select the chairperson.
 - d) The Legal Department at SAFF shall assume the secretariat of the Electoral Committee and participate in the committee's activities as a consultant. The General Secretariat of SAFF may assist the Electoral Committee at any time, provided that the assistant persons are not candidates for any SAFF elections and have no conflict of interest.
5. If one of the Electoral Committee members is a candidate for elections, he shall declare the same early enough to allow replacing him without prejudicing the elections timetable.

Article (6): Completion of the Electoral Committee Works:

The duties and works of the Electoral Committee shall come to an end upon the expiry of the appeal time limit set forth in the elections timetable.

Article (7): Membership Conditions for Electoral Committee:

1. Members of the Electoral Committee shall not be members of SAFF's General Assembly or Board of Directors or the General Secretariat.
2. Members of the Electoral Committee shall immediately withdraw from the matter under consideration and abstain from taking any decision in the following situations:
 - a) If they are connected in a direct kinship with a candidate for filling any required position.
 - b) If there is any possibility of a conflict of interest.
3. Members of the Electoral Committee shall consider the highest levels of integrity and impartiality when they perform their duties.
4. If an Electoral Committee member fails to meet any of the above requirements and/or if he has to cease his membership of the Electoral Committee for any reason, he shall be replaced according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Code.

Article (8): Powers of the Electoral Committee:

The Electoral Committee shall:

1. Issue the elections timetable;

2. Set down the date for nomination for SAFF Board chairmanship and membership;
3. Oversee and monitor the opening of nominations, and receive the files of candidates;
4. Oversee the closing of nominations for Board chairmanship and membership, and prepare the necessary minutes;
5. Approve the preliminary and final lists of candidates for Board chairmanship and membership after having considered them and confirmed that they have met all conditions provided for under this Code;
6. Approve the preliminary and final lists of the General Assembly members eligible to attend at the General Assembly and vote on the election day;
7. Exclude, as it may deem appropriate, the candidates not meeting the conditions provided for under this Code;
8. Exclude, as it may deem appropriate, the General Assembly members not meeting the conditions provided for under this Code;
9. Monitor the acts of candidates and prevent any irregularities or violations;
10. Form executive committees to manage the election process;
11. Determine the place where the General Assembly in charge of elections is convened in coordination with SAFF;
12. Prepare organizational and procedural manuals and action forms for elections;
13. Make voters and candidates familiar with their rights and duties;
14. Draw up the guidelines required for the convention of the General Assembly in charge of elections; and
15. Request information and manage relationships with governmental authorities (when necessary).

Article (9): Electoral Committee's Meetings and Decisions:

1. The quorum of the Electoral Committee's meeting shall be present if attended by the absolute majority. The Committee issues its decisions based on an ordinary majority. In the event of a tie, the Committee Chairman shall have a casting vote.
2. Decisions shall be recorded in minutes to be signed by the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Electoral Committee.

Article (10): Appeals against Electoral Committee's Decisions:

Decisions of the Election Committee may be appealed before the Saudi Sport Arbitration Center, in accordance with the elections timetable, within five (5) days from the decision notification date as per the following conditions:

- a) The arbitration panel shall comprise three (3) arbitrators;
- b) The arbitration language shall be Arabic;
- c) The arbitration venue shall be the city where the elections are held;
- d) The arbitration shall be done urgently.
- e) The arbitration panel shall issue its decision in accordance with the elections timetable.

Article (11): Completion of the Saudi Sport Arbitration Center Works

The duties and works of the Saudi Sport Arbitration Center shall end upon expiry of the appeals period and upon notifying the Electoral Committee of the resolutions in accordance with the elections timetable.

Chapter IV: Rules on General Assembly Formation and Election of Board Chairman and Members and Provisions of Nomination and Election

Article (12): General Assembly Formation:

1. The General Assembly shall be comprised of the number of members set forth in the Statutes.
2. The representatives shall be affiliated with the member represented thereby. They shall be appointed or elected by the competent authority and have the ability to evidence the same when requested.
3. The General Assembly representatives who represent their clubs shall be board members of such clubs.
4. Each General Assembly member shall have one vote. Only present member representatives may vote and no voting may be made on Board resolutions by proxy or correspondence.
5. SAFF Board members and Secretary General shall attend the General Assembly meetings but they have no right to vote. Board members may not be selected or elected as representatives of the General Assembly member throughout their tenure on the SAFF Board of Directors.
6. The Secretariat General shall prepare the voters' table for voting during the ballot day; listing the names of representatives of General Assembly members who have the right to vote on the ballot day and communicate the same according to the elections timetable.

Article (13): Board Nomination Conditions:

1. The Board chairman and members shall be nominated according to the mechanism set forth in the Statutes.
2. The conditions to be met by the candidate for the office of the chairman shall be according to the terms and conditions of the Statutes.
3. The conditions to be met by the candidate for the office of the deputy chairman and members shall be according to the terms and conditions of the Statutes.
4. The candidate may not be nominated in more than one electoral list.
5. The following categories may not run for the Board membership:
 - a. Military persons unless prior consent of their authority is obtained.
 - b. Non-retired players, coaches, and referees.
6. The electoral lists shall be submitted in the way determined by the Electoral Committee.

7. The Electoral Committee shall ensure that all nominations and candidates have met the conditions.
8. The Electoral Committee shall record the nominations arranged (alphabetically) and take upon expiry of the nomination period minutes of the conclusion of the registration of candidates with the same being signed by the Electoral Committee chairman and members and a list shall be attached therewith stating the names of candidates for the Board elections.
9. The candidate lists shall be initially and then finally announced, in accordance with the specified elections timetable, at SAFF's headquarters or through technology channels or SAFF's social media networks.
10. Any candidate in an electoral list may assign a nomination in writing before the Secretariat General during the time limit outlined in the elections timetable. Said candidate shall be replaced with another candidate from outside the electoral list within two (2) days from the assignment submission date.
11. Every electoral list shall be entitled to election propaganda through duly available mass media as of the date of declaration of the final candidate lists up until the day before the ballot. No electoral list may directly or indirectly consolidate with any other electoral list.

Article (14): General Assembly Quorum and Resolutions:

The General Assembly, during which the elections are held, shall convene in accordance with the conditions and requirements stipulated in the Statutes and determined by relevant bodies.

Article (15): Final List of Candidates:

The final list of candidates shall be sent to all General Assembly members no later than seven (7) days before the date of the convention of the General Assembly scheduled for Board election. The list shall further be sent to the competent governmental authorities and announced at SAFF's headquarters or through technology channels or SAFF's social media networks.

Article (16): Deadline for Convention of the General Assembly Scheduled for Board Election:

The Electoral Committee shall through SAFF Secretariat General call the General Assembly to convene to elect the Board chairman and members at least seven (7) days before convention thereof. The call shall be attached with the final electoral lists provided that the General Assembly is declared via different mass media.

Article (17): Elections:

1. Elections shall be made on a list basis according to the procedures provided for under the Statutes.
2. The Board tenure shall be conforming to the period stipulated in the Statutes.

Chapter V: Election Procedures

Article (18): Ballot and Ballot Papers:

1. Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot.
2. SAFF Secretariat General shall issue the ballot papers under the supervision and liability of the Electoral Committee provided that they are printed and legible.
3. The color of the ballot papers shall be different in each election round.
4. The ballot paper shall clearly state the particulars to facilitate the election process according to this Code.

Article (19): Ballot Boxes:

1. Before voting, the ballot boxes shall be opened and presented to the General Assembly members before being closed thereafter.
2. Ballot boxes shall be transparent and positioned in a conspicuous place near the Electoral Committee members.
3. A member of the Electoral Committee shall watch the ballot boxes during voting.

Article (20): Polling Booths:

The polling booths shall be erected near the ballot boxes for the General Assembly members, who have the right to vote secretly, to fill in the ballot papers.

Article (21): Voting:

1. The Electoral Committee chairman shall explain the voting process in detail in terms of (ballot boxes, valid and invalid ballot papers, sorting, required majority, results, and adequacy of election rules) and refer, if possible, to the relevant provisions.
2. The Electoral Committee chairman shall alphabetically call the name of every General Assembly member who has the right to vote and request him to head for the front part of the room to ascertain his identity card and conclude the voting process.
3. The member shall advance and receive the ballot paper after having signed in the table of voters and entering the polling booth to mark his choice in the ballot paper.
4. The member shall then drop the ballot paper into the ballot box.
5. Vote sorting shall commence once the members who have the right to vote have dropped the ballot papers into the ballot boxes. The box shall be opened and all ballot papers emptied before the present members proceed with sorting the votes.
6. Voting shall be concluded according to the procedures outlined in this Code.
7. If there is one list only, it shall be appointed by acclamation with no need for electoral procedures.

Article (22): Votes Sorting:

Votes shall be separately sorted and counted in public at the polling venue before the final results of each round are announced.

Article (23): Invalidity of the Ballot Paper:

1. The following ballot papers shall be held invalid in the ballot:
 - a- Ballot papers that do not bear the official distinctive marks to be determined by the Electoral Committee;
 - b- Ballot papers that bear any other expressions other than candidate names;
 - c- Illegible ballot papers;
 - d- Ballot papers that bear any other expressions other than candidate names; and
 - e- Ballot papers that bear specific defining marks.
2. Any misspellings or typos shall not invalidate voting unless they do not permit accurate determination of the names of candidates.
3. The Electoral Committee chairman shall write at the back of every (cancelled) ballot paper in red the grounds of invalidity of such paper and sign the same as confirmation.
4. The Electoral Committee decision shall be final, binding and uncontestable where a dispute arises in connection with validity or invalidity of any ballot paper, capacity or non-capacity to vote, registration of the minutes, declaration of results or any other sorting related issue.

Article (24): Sorting and Declaration of Results:

1. The ballot results shall be counted based on the valid registered ballot papers.
2. Once the ballot box is opened at any round of the elections, the Electoral Committee members shall count the ballot papers in a loud voice after having ensured that they are valid. Where the number of ballot papers is equal or less than the issued ballot papers, the ballot shall be held valid. However, if the number of ballot papers exceeds the number of the issued ballot papers, the ballot shall be declared invalid and instantly repeated.
3. After having ascertained the number of ballot papers, the Electoral Committee members shall count the votes affixed on the ballot paper and read the same aloud.
4. Immediately after having concluded and ascertained sorting for each round, the Electoral Committee chairman shall officially announce the results before the General Assembly members.
5. Where it is necessary to organize another round of voting, the voting shall be re-held according to the above articles. The General Assembly members shall be notified of the statutory provisions regulating the second round of voting in connection with any changes made to the required majority or the names of excluded candidates.

Article (25): Announcing the Final Results:

1. After every round of the elections, the Electoral Committee chairman shall officially announce the election results before the General Assembly members and the minutes shall be taken to this effect and signed by the Electoral Committee chairman and members.
2. The final minutes shall be distributed to the General Assembly members and a copy thereof sent to the relevant authorities and included in the General Assembly's minutes record.
3. Resolutions of the final election results shall be final, binding, and uncontestable before whatsoever body.

Article (26): Ascertaining Validity of Procedures:

The Electoral Committee shall have the exclusive right to ascertain the identity of the persons entitled to vote and ensure compliance with the voting procedures.

Chapter VI: Closing Provisions

Article (27): Closing Provisions:

1. The provisions of SAFF Statutes and FIFA shall be considered in connection with the elections and control thereon along with the penalties imposed on any violation of the provisions thereof.
2. The Electoral Committee shall deliver all official documents of elections to SAFF Secretariat General which shall pass the same to the relevant authorities and archive the same when necessary.
3. As regards all election issues concerning which this Code is silent, they shall be subject to the discretion of the Electoral Committee that may exclude any list or any member thereof in the event of violation of the provisions of SAFF Statutes or regulations, this Code or main international statutes and regulations thereof.

Article (28): Enforcement and Validity:

1. The amendments made to this Code were approved and adopted at the General Assembly meeting held in Riyadh on 23/03/1444 A.H, corresponding to 19/10/2022 A.D, and came into force as of the approval date thereof.
2. This Code shall repeal all laws, regulations, circulars, or resolutions that contradict therewith; and any provision contradicting therewith shall be held null and void.

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SAFF

الاتحاد السعودي لكرة القدم
SAUDI ARABIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION