



## Iowa Soccer Association Member Rules

---

### GENERAL

#### PURPOSE

The rules contained herein shall govern all classifications of youth and adult members of the Iowa Soccer Association, Inc. (hereinafter Association, Iowa Soccer or State Association) in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Iowa Soccer Bylaws. All competitions shall be governed by the rules stated herein, unless the rules of a specific competition state otherwise. The rules of the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), the US Youth Soccer Association (US Youth Soccer) and the United States Adult Soccer Association (USASA) supersede these rules. Member Organizations, including youth leagues, may adopt rules and policies that are more restrictive than those contained herein.

These Membership rules are intended to provide a uniform set of guidelines governing player eligibility and registration, team formation and player assignments, playing rules and standards of sportsmanship and conduct for use by Organizational and Individual Members.

#### SCOPE

All Member Organizations are directed to distribute these rules to every youth player, every coach, team manager, administrator, and referee. It is intended that the player and/or coach will make known the contents of this rule to his/her parents and spectators.

All members and participants in soccer within the jurisdiction of Iowa Soccer have requested to participate in our programs. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the Bylaws, Policies, and Rules of Iowa Soccer, their local playing organization, as well as those of the USSF and its youth and adult councils. The Iowa Soccer Bylaws provide that it has jurisdiction over all Member Organizations, players, coaches, team managers, administrators, and team representatives who choose to affiliate. Any member or participant within the jurisdiction of Iowa Soccer found in violation of its Bylaws, Policies or Rules, and/or those of the USSF and its youth and adult councils, may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### DEFINITIONS

- A. **Member Organizations** mean youth affiliates and adult leagues.
- B. **Seasonal Year** means September 1 to August 31 of the following year.
- C. **Registration** means the signing of an intent to play the sport of soccer and the paying of a fee to become a member of the Association.
- D. **Team** means a recognized entity organized for the purpose of playing the sport of soccer.
- E. **Rostering** means assignment of a registered player to a team.
- F. **Eligible to play** means registered and not under suspension or other punitive action or status.



- G. **Suspension/Bad Standing** means the temporary withdrawal of rights and privileges such as but not limited to the right to play, coach or otherwise administer or participate directly or indirectly in Iowa Soccer's or its members' activity; such standing is governed by Iowa Soccer Bylaw Article XI. Any person or group (team, club, league, player, coach, etc.) that has been suspended shall be in less than good standing for the entire term of the suspension with all rights and privileges withdrawn unless specifically stated otherwise by the suspending authority.
- H. **Add** means the addition of a player to a team's roster.
- I. **Drop** means to remove a player from a team roster.
- J. **Release** means the withdrawal of a player from a roster during the current seasonal year.
- K. **Transfer** means the movement of a currently or previously-rostered player onto another roster or; the movement of a player who returns to the same roster within the current seasonal year.
- L. **Ejection** means the send-off of any player during a game, the dismissal of a coach during a game or the dismissal of a player before or after a game.
- M. **Multiple Registration** means having a player rostered to 2 teams during a seasonal year.
- N. **Tournament Team** is a team composed of players from more than one registered club. This team can only enter tournaments and competitions that allow Tournament Teams. Tournament Teams at the 7 and under through 19 and under divisions are allowed.
- O. **Event Roster** is a team created of players from within a registered club. This team can only enter tournaments and competitions that allow Event Rosters. Event Rosters at the 7 and under through 19 and under divisions are allowed.
- P. **Bulk Registration** is the act of registering without forming teams and rosters. The roster limits must be followed for all competitions per Section 9 of the Iowa Soccer Association, Inc. Membership Rules, including when creating Tournament and Event rosters.

## SECTION 1 YOUTH TEAM FORMATION RULES AND REGISTRATION CLASSIFICATION

Iowa Soccer 11 and under through 19 and under teams are required to be self-designated as "Select" or "Recreational". Iowa Soccer 9 and under and 10 and under teams are required to be designated as "Academy" or "Recreational". All 8 and under and below teams will be classified as "Recreational".

### Recreational Team Formation Rules and Registration Classification

- The team formation process will be random in nature.
- Criteria for player assignment will NOT include consideration for the ability of the player or the relative strength of the team.
- All forms of recruiting, invitations and tryouts are specifically prohibited. Coaches will have no direct input to or involvement with the assignment of players to their teams.
- If a Member Organization permits teams to remain together from season to season, the player has the option to stay on the team.

- New teams and returning teams that need players are formed by one of the following methods:
  - a. Players are assigned (rostered) to a team by age groups on a territorial basis (neighborhood, schools, precincts, zip codes, etc.)
  - b. Players are assigned (rostered) to a team by a random draw from a single player pool on a territorial basis as stated in (a) above.
- Players' names shall not be identified to the coach until the player is placed on the team. Only the head coach may request his/her child be rostered to the team that he/she is coaching.

### **Academy Team Formation Rules and Registration Classification**

Academy is an Iowa Soccer program for 9 and under and 10 and under players, with strict guidelines designed to facilitate an additional pathway for player and coach development. Players registering to participate in an Academy approved program will not be denied a spot on an Academy team. Academy teams must follow Recreational team formation rules and classification.

### **Select Team Formation Rules and Registration Classification**

Member Organizations and playing leagues may establish their own criteria for player selection and team assignment provided there is no conflict with Iowa Soccer Association Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, and Policies.

## **SECTION 2 MEMBER ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION, RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Organizations seeking Iowa Soccer affiliation must complete the Iowa Soccer Application for Affiliation and provide the required documentation. Approval of the application and subsequent affiliation will depend on successfully addressing the Guidelines as stated in the application.
- B. Member Organizations and playing leagues may elect to adopt the same or stricter rules within its own organization provided those rules do not conflict with Association Constitution, Bylaws, Policies, or Rules.
- C. All Member Organizations must have a written Discipline and Appeals Procedures section in their constitution, bylaws, rules or other appropriate document. Written notification of subsequent changes to the organization's governing documents must be made to the Association within thirty (30) days of the adoption of such changes. The Association will notify in writing the Member Organization in the event an organization rule or rules appear to be in conflict with Iowa Soccer governing documents to the extent such changes may:
  - 1. Preclude teams of the Member Organization from participating in competitions sponsored by Iowa Soccer, US Youth Soccer or USASA, or
  - 2. Jeopardize continued membership in Iowa Soccer.



- D. Each Member Organization shall be responsible for ensuring proper registration of its players and teams, proper accounting for fiscal transactions and accurate and timely reporting as required to Iowa Soccer.
- E. Each Member Organization will plan and conduct player registration prior to each playing season.

### **SECTION 3      PLAYER REGISTRATION AND AGES**

- A. All youth and adult players must register annually and re-register prior to each season. Youth registration of soccer players under these rules shall include all those registrants defined as youth by the US Soccer Federation, which are all male and female registrants under the age of 19 years as defined in these rules under Section 3.D. Adult registration of soccer players will be all male and female registrants over the age of 19 years.
  - 1. Registration - The player is registered to the State Association the moment the player or the player's parent or guardian signs the registration form and pays the appropriate fees.
  - 2. Obligation - A youth player and parent are committed to the full term of the obligation as specified in writing by the Member Organization unless the Member Organization agrees to a request for a player transfer. In any case the player/parent must fulfill their financial obligation stipulated by the signing of the commitment.
  - 3. Rostering - Rostering means assignment of a registered player to a team. Initial rostering shall commence no later than the player's first participation in a competition such as a tournament, festival or league game. Rosters may change but only with the approval of the club registrar and in accordance with Member Organization, adult playing league, Iowa Soccer, US Youth Soccer, USASA, and USSF rules and regulations.
- B. Age grouping for youth play will be: 4 and under, 6 and under, 8 and under, 10 and under, 11 and under, 12 and under, 13 and under, 14 and under, 15 and under, 16 and under, 17 and under, 18 and under, 19 and under.

For the 4 and under age division, we request the following:

- 1. The children must be bulk registered with Iowa Soccer.
- 2. Program directors and volunteers must take and clear a background check.
- 3. Program directors and volunteers must pay the equivalent amount equal to registering a coach with Iowa Soccer if not already registered.
- 4. For implementation procedures, please refer to the Iowa Soccer website (<https://usys-assets.ae-admin.com/assets/923/15/resources-U4-Program-Overview.pdf>) and the 4 and under Player Development Guidelines



- C. Bulk Registration is the act of registering without forming teams and rosters. A format of bulk registration is allowed in all age groups per the bulk registration policies set forth by Iowa Soccer.
- D. The age of a player for purpose of registration is based on the player's age in any given calendar year - January 1 through December 31. For specific age division details, please refer to the Iowa Soccer website and the birth year/ age group matrix. <https://usys-assets.ae-admin.com/assets/923/15/initiatives-chart-birth-year.pdf>. The current seasonal year begins on September 1 and ends August 31 of the following year.
- E. Member Organizations will require all players to present proof of age when they register to play.
  - 1. Proof of age shall consist of a birth certificate or birth registration issued by an appropriate government agency, Board of Health records, passport, valid driver's license, alien registration card issued by the United States Government, a certificate issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service attesting to age, a Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card issued by the Uniformed Services of the United States or a certification of an American citizen born abroad issued by the appropriate government agency. Hospital, baptismal or religious certificates will not be accepted. Member Organizations are encouraged not to keep a copy of proof of age of each player.
  - 2. International Clearance must be followed for players outside the United States as per United States Soccer Federation Policy 601-6.
- F. Teams playing up in age divisions. 4 through 10 and under teams may not play up in higher age divisions. 11 and under and 12 and under teams may not play up in higher age divisions unless approved by their playing league.

Players individually playing up in age divisions. With the exception of 4 and under, players may play up on higher age division teams. The determination of a player's ability and eligibility for play up rests with the affiliate and/or the affiliate's playing league. 12 and under and 14 and under teams cannot be created to subvert this rule. Teams in the 11 and under and 12 and under age divisions cannot have a roster that has more than forty (40) percent of their players who are 10 and under or younger. Teams in the 13 and under and 14 and under age divisions cannot have a roster that has more than sixty (60) percent of their players who are 12 and under or younger.



## **SECTION 4     PLAYER PASSES**

All Iowa Soccer-approved rosters and player passes must be generated by the Iowa Soccer registration software/online solution.

For all matches in the 10 and under through the 19 and under age divisions and in all inter-club 8 and under matches, player passes must be presented to the referees prior to each match. Player passes must have a picture affixed and be laminated. In all intra-club matches in the 8 and under divisions and below the competition authority may set policy for player pass presentation.

This policy does not include tournament play that is governed by State Association requirements, the Application to Host, and Hosting Agreement.

## **SECTION 5     PLAYER REGISTRATION AND TRANSFERS**

### **YOUTH**

- A. All youth and adult players must register annually and re-register prior to each season.
- B. Youth players not residing in Iowa may be required to request written permission from Iowa Soccer for the player to be allowed to register and roster on an Iowa Soccer team. Such requests must be sent to Iowa Soccer for processing and consideration.
- C. A youth player may be required to register through, or be released from, the state association of the player's residence. If the player wishes to play on a team in another state association, the player may be required to obtain and complete an Interstate Transfer form. The form, along with the appropriate fee, must be submitted to the Member Organization with which the player would register. The form and the fee then are submitted to the State Association for approval.
- D. Starting at 09 and under age group youth players may be registered to two Iowa Soccer-approved teams at any given time during the seasonal year; this is considered multiple rostering. One team must be designated as the primary team. The other team will be designated as the secondary team.
  - 1. Multiple rostered players will be charged a registration fee for each designated team.
  - 2. Each team is limited to three (3) secondary rostered players.
  - 3. Players multiple rostered to a Recreational team and a Select team will have the Select team designated as their primary team.
  - 4. A multiple rostered player will have a player pass issued for each team. The roster will designate the primary and secondary teams.
  - 5. 4 and under through 8 and under players cannot Multiple Roster.
  - 6. Registered Academy program players cannot Multiple Roster.



- E. The exceptions to Section D above are: unaffiliated Olympic Development players and college players.
- F. Those players wishing to play in the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Iowa State Cup must be primary rostered to their Cup team.
- G. Youth players may change teams during the seasonal year in the following manner:
  - 1. Member Organizations reserve the right to reassign players and re-register the new teams by filing the appropriate forms (i.e. transfer forms, adds, deletes) with Iowa Soccer.
  - 2. Rostered players may be transferred within their club, from team to team, by that club's registrar.
  - 3. Rostered players may transfer from club to club during the seasonal year only by completing and submitting a Transfer form. With the exception of transfers of Recreational players, a transfer will be assessed to the receiving team as per the National Championship Series rules.
  - 4. Member Organizations may deny player transfers if the player/parent has not fulfilled their obligation, financial and/or other, to the club, an obligation that was presented to them in writing at the time of the original registration.
  - 5. Member Organizations may form Tournament/Event teams in 7 and under through 19 and under age divisions from players who are rostered with Member Organization teams. These teams are registered for one event only and will be so designated on the roster. The Association will charge a fee for each Tournament roster. The roster must be completed and submitted by the Member Organization from which the Head Coach of the team is registered.
  - 6. Youth players may register and play on adult teams without losing youth eligibility. Youth teams may play in adult leagues.

## ADULT

- A. Adults must register with the State Association through leagues.
- B. Adult players may register on one or more teams during the same seasonal year and will be charged a fee for each additional team.
- C. Adults may transfer to another team with notification to the leagues. The league must notify the State Association of the change.
- D. Roster sizes for adults will be determined by league rules.



## SECTION 6 REGISTRATION AND CHANGE OF A PLAYER'S RESIDENCE

- A. A player changing residence outside the State of Iowa must immediately notify the Member Organization with whom the player is registered and surrender his/her player pass to the Member Organization's Registrar.

## SECTION 7 MEMBER ORGANIZATION REGISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Each Member Organization shall be obligated to register its players with Iowa Soccer in accordance with USSF Policy 212-1. This includes participants in any of the Member Organization's programs such as camps, clinics and other organized activities. The exceptions to this rule are: 1) scheduled tryouts for Select teams either organized as tryouts or a part of team practices as long as the number of tryouts or practices does not exceed three per participating player; or (2) organized summer day camps. These exceptions allow Member Organizations the ability to showcase their service offerings and extend "goodwill" service to nonmembers of the community.

## SECTION 8 GUEST PLAYERS AND PLAYER LOANS

- A. When playing outside Iowa for friendly or tournament matches, Iowa Soccer shall allow the use of the number of guest players that is allowed by the tournament or hosting organization, provided that the request for guest player inclusion is made to Iowa Soccer through the Guest Player agreement process.
- B. When playing in Iowa, unless required by the hosting organization, guest player requests do not have to be submitted for Iowa Soccer players wishing to guest play on Iowa Soccer teams playing in Iowa Soccer-approved tournaments.
- C. For Iowa Soccer registered players wishing to guest play on teams from other State Associations, a Player Loan Agreement request must be submitted to Iowa Soccer.

## SECTION 9 ROSTER SIZES AND PER SIDE SIZES

| <u>Age Division</u>    | <u>Maximum Roster Size</u> | <u>Maximum Players Per Side</u> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 4 and under*           |                            |                                 |
| 6 and under            | 6                          | 4v4                             |
| 8 and under            | 6                          | 4v4                             |
| 10 and under           | 12                         | 7v7                             |
| 12 and under           | 16                         | 9v9                             |
| 13 and under and above | 22                         | 11v11                           |

\*4 and under information is under Section 3.B.





For teams in the 13 and under and above age divisions that have more than 18 on the roster, only 18 players will be allowed on the game roster and on the team's sideline during any match.

## **SECTION 10 RECRUITING & TRYOUTS**

Iowa Soccer Recruiting Policy:

Recruiting: Defined as any action initiated by a club member (coach, assistant coach, team manager, coordinator, trainer, parent, or any person representing a team or club) who seeks to enlist the services of a player.

Recruiting Violation: Defined as any action initiated by a club member (coach, assistant coach, team manager, coordinator, trainer, parent, or any person representing a team or club) who directly contacts a player who is registered to another ISA member club at any time throughout the seasonal year (August 1 – July 31). There must be documentation of the direct contact in order to allege a recruiting violation has occurred.

Permitted Contact: Contact with a player for limited purpose of participating as a guest player with prior documented approval from the player's current club director.

Social Media and Texting: Clicking on a social media post is permissible (i.e., retweeting or likes) and thus is not considered a recruiting violation. If, however, a club member contacts a player directly via one of those social media platforms or by SMS text message then this can be considered a violation.

Camps and Clinics: A player is eligible to attend a camp or clinic from another soccer organization should they choose to do so by their own accord. However, a soccer organization cannot directly contact a player from another organization and invite them to participate in a soccer program as this can be considered a violation.

### **Club Promotion**

There is a difference between club marketing/promoting and recruiting. Clubs may generally promote their programs and try-outs publicly in the following places.

|               |               |                  |                  |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Club Websites | Public Media  | Social Media     | Schools          |
| Libraries     | Sports Stores | Public Bulletins | Club Newsletters |

### **Contacts Database**

Clubs may only use contacts database for that seasonal year, and the year prior.

### **Public Events**

Prior to distributing any promotional material at another clubs event, you must have written



permission from that club/organization.

### **Tryouts**

Tryouts in the 4 and under through the 10 and under age divisions are strictly prohibited. For tryouts in the 11 and under and above age divisions, Member Organizations are governed by their respective league/club rules/policies and by Iowa Soccer Coaches Code of Ethics/Conduct. All tryouts for team formation must be unrestricted. Restricted tryouts TBD.

### **Unrestricted Tryouts**

- The tryout calendar will be posted on ISA General Membership Page
- Registered or unregistered players may participate in unrestricted tryouts.
- Any currently registered player who accepts a spot on a team of a different club for the next seasonal year may not train or participate with their new club until the next seasonal year begins (August 1), or the player receives a written release by the current registered club's Coaching Director or designated team official.

### **Restricted Tryouts**

- Restricted tryouts are only for a club's membership.
- Restricted tryouts are permitted any time during the seasonal year.
- Any tryout solicitation, advertisement or invitation must clearly state that only current club members may participate.

### **Invitation to join a club**

Invites to join a club may only be sent once during a 12 hour window on a date published within the tryout calendar, which will be available on the ISA General Membership Page. Invites may be sent using email and one of the following methods.

- Phone Call
- Official Letter
- Web Publication

### **Player Response**

A player and his/her family has 12 hours to respond to invite/offer. Iowa Soccer will provide helpful information to families to prepare for this exciting opportunity.

### **Becoming a member**

A player is considered registered to a club the moment the player, parent or guardian personally or electronically signs club's form.

### **Guest Players**

Before approaching a player(s) who is registered with another club, and/or the player's parents, regarding an opportunity to guest play or dual participate, the Director of Coaching or designated club official from that club must be asked permission to contact the player and/or parents. The Club



Director has the right to refuse permission.

### **Recruiting Violations**

Allegations of recruiting violations must be based on fact. A written report detailing the alleged violation, including the rules or policies violated and all documents and witnesses supporting the allegation must be submitted to the membership director for review and determination. If the allegation

proves to be true the following sanctions will be applied.

- Violation 1: Automatic \$500 fine plus any further action by the disciplinary committee
- Violation 2: Automatic \$1000 fine plus any further action by the disciplinary committee
- Violation 3: The club will be suspended from Iowa Soccer run leagues for a minimum of one year, and is subject to additional sanctions as determined by the disciplinary committee.

## **SECTION 11 COACHES**

- A. All teams must have coaches on the sideline during practices and competitions.
- B. In order to be on the sideline during practices and competitions, all coaches must complete a volunteer disclosure form and be cleared by a background check before being considered registered and able assume any coaching duties.
- C. Head coaches coaching youth teams must not be younger than 18 years of age. Assistant coaches may be under 18 years of age as long as they are coaching in the presence of a head coach who is 18 years old or older.
- D. All coaches, both head and assistant coaches, ~~should~~ **must** have a **laminated**, US Youth coach pass at every practice and match visibly available for verification and signifying that they are registered and have passed the required background check and completed the required risk management trainings.

## **SECTION 12 SPORTSMANSHIP, MISCONDUCT AND ABUSE**

All Member Organizations are directed to monitor, investigate and act as may be appropriate to ensure any and all problems regarding unsporting conduct and ethical breeches are not permitted. Any and all such activity may in some cases preclude action by a league or Iowa soccer, but will not in all cases eliminate such action by a league or Iowa Soccer.

Any misconduct justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the Member Organization with which the player, coach or team official is affiliated. The Member Organization shall promptly (within 10 days after the receipt of the report) rule on the report and take appropriate action. If dissatisfied with the decision, the charged party has the right to appeal the decision to the Member Organization. If that appeal is denied, the appellant has the right to appeal the decision to the State Association.

Verbal or physical abuse by a coach or player upon a referee is governed by USSF Bylaws. In matters of verbal or physical abuse by a coach, player or other team official upon all others, the Member



Organization is expected to act promptly (within 5 days of the incident) and in a manner appropriate for the violation. A full report of the incident and the Member Organization's subsequent action is to be submitted to Iowa Soccer immediately after action is determined. Iowa Soccer will determine the extent of action to take, if any, in addition to that taken by the Member Organization and the process and procedures will be guided by the Iowa Soccer Hearing and Appeals Policy.

Spectator misconduct must be acted upon by the club with whom the spectator is associated.

All Member Organizations are encouraged to adopt the Alliance 4 All Codes of Conduct for coaches, players, parents and in-house referees. Organization Members may adopt their own codes if they wish to enhance the Alliance 4 All codes, or to make the items more restrictive.

### **SECTION 13 OBTAINING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR A LEAGUE**

For the purpose of determining if insurance coverage may be extended to a league, a league representative must submit, annually, a form confirming the league will meet the requirement for being insured. If the requirement is met, insurance coverage will be granted for the designated season or seasonal year for which it has been requested.

Requirement for obtaining insurance coverage

- All players, coaches and teams participating in the league must be registered with Iowa Soccer, or with another US Soccer member organization

### **SECTION 14 APPROVING TOURNAMENTS**

If an Iowa Soccer Member Organization intends to operate an Iowa Soccer-approved tournament, which includes having insurance coverage, it must be approved through Iowa Soccer's tournament approval process.

During the approval process, the tournament will be evaluated based upon an application that contains:

- A "Request to Host a Tournament" form
- A "Host Agreement" form
- The tournament rules, regulations and policies, which must reflect, with no exceptions:
  - Iowa Soccer Member Rules Section 8 "Guest Players and Player Loans" will apply to Iowa teams in the tournament
  - 4U-10U divisions, if applicable to the tournament, may only play a festival style format wherein
    - Scores and standings are not kept
    - There is no "advancement" to championship games and no awards are given based upon standings
    - Participation awards are given to individual players



If approval is not granted, the Member Organization will have the opportunity to address shortcomings and resubmit its application.

Upon approval, the tournament will be considered “Iowa Soccer approved” and will have insurance coverage.

## **SECTION 15    RULE REVISIONS**

Any proposed revisions to these Rules may be made by an Organizational Member, the Board of Directors, a member of the Board of Directors, or a member of the staff of the State Association.

Any proposed revision to these Rules must be submitted in writing to the State Association at least 30 days in advance of a Board of Director’s Meeting. Each proposed revision received in compliance as stated above, and/or by the staff or Board of Directors, shall be submitted in writing to each member of the Board of Directors at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the next scheduled Board of Director’s meeting.

Any revision to these rules requires a simple majority of those in attendance at the Board of Director’s meeting in which the revision is considered. In the event of a conflict between the proposed revision and the Iowa Soccer Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, or policies, and/or requirements of US Youth Soccer, USASA, or USSF, the articles, bylaws, policies, and requirements of US Youth Soccer, USASA, and USSF govern.

Unless otherwise provided, any revision to these rules is effective immediately upon approval.

**Board Approved (3/31/01)**

**Revised (8/2/03)**

**Revised (5/24/04)**

**Revised (6/24/04)**

**Revised (11/20/04)**

**Revised (5/1/05)**

**Revised (11/19/05)**

**Revised (3/25/10)**

**Revised (3/10/12)**

**Revised (3/2/13)**

**Revised (2/22/14)**

**Revised (6/27/15)**

**Revised (6/11/16)**

**Revised (6/28/17)**

**Revised (12/5/17)**

**Revised (6/08/2019)**

**Revised (5/12/2021)**