



Iowa Soccer is the sanctioned governing body of US Youth Soccer and US Soccer and is dedicated to serving the development of players while being supportive of and in compliance with our national organizations' requirements and programming.

The Iowa Soccer League (ISL State League) is the highest level of competition for domestic league play in our competitions pathway and is critical to player development. The ISL State League is guided by one overarching focus – player development and therefore is evolving to be in full alignment with US Soccer's Player Development Initiatives (PDI's). Additionally, in delivering US Youth Soccer programming, such as National Championship Series, Iowa Soccer must ensure teams, players and coaches are in compliance with US Youth Soccer rules and policies.

The ISL State League is guided by the following:

- **Player Development:** The league is player-centered and focuses on what is in the best interest of long-term player development.
- **Club Development:** Clubs are critical to the player development process. Therefore, Iowa Soccer is working to support club development and to help clubs create environments that facilitate the player development process.
- **State, Regional and National Competition Pathways/Compliance:** Only US Youth Soccer sanctioned leagues may serve as a qualifying entry point into the US Youth Soccer competition pathways, which include league play (the Midwest Regional League and the National League) and tournament play (the National Championship Series Iowa State Cup and the Iowa Soccer Presidents Cup).
- **Tournament Participation:** The league calendar includes BYE weekends on which teams may choose to participate in existing Iowa Member Club Tournaments.
- **Player Development Advisory Panel (PDAP):** an advisory panel consisting of qualified and licensed technical leaders from member clubs engages with League leadership and the State Director of Coaching Education and provides input.
- **US Soccer Player Development Initiatives:** These initiatives include:
 1. Calendar alignment (i.e., set play dates)
 2. Consistent schedules (i.e., 6-10 games based upon request)
 3. Developmentally appropriate match-ups
 4. Appropriate practice-to-game ratios
 5. Appropriate number of games per day and per season
 - a. 2017-2018 Season Initiative:
 - i. 15U-18U play one game/day (i.e., 90 minute games)
 - ii. 13U-14U play one game/day* (i.e., 80 minute games)

**As the league evolves, for the 2017-2018 season a 13U-14U team can request a second game on the same day if they are traveling more than 90 minutes.*



Important Dates:

- Registration Open: June 26th
- Registration Close: July 9th @ midnight
- ISL Summer Meeting: Thursday, July 13th @ Grinnell
- Preliminary Schedule Release: August 9th
- Schedule Review/Change Request: August 9th – August 13th
- Schedule Publish: August 16th
- Opening Weekend: August 26-27
- Holiday Weekend: September 2-3
- Closing Weekend: November 4-5

Age Groups of Competition:

- 2007 & 2006 Boys and Girls East (4 play dates / double headers)
- 2007 & 2006 Central Boys and Girls (regular league format)
- 2005 Boys and Girls (State Wide) --**13U**
- 2004 Boys and Girls (State Wide) --**14U**
- 2003 Boys and Girls (State Wide) --**15U**
- 2002 Boys and Girls (State Wide) --**16U**
- 2001 Boys and Girls (State Wide) --**17U**
- 2000 Boys and Girls (State Wide) --**18U**
- 1999 Boys and Girls (State Wide) --**19U**

Fees:	League registration:	\$195/Team
Referees:	11U/12U:	\$35/Team
	13U/14U:	\$45/Team
	15U/16U:	\$TBD
	17U-19U:	\$TBD

Divisions of Play:

- 2007/2006: 1st Division, 2nd Division, 3rd Division
- 2005-1999: Premier Division, 1st Division, 2nd Division

Divisional Placement: The goal of multiple divisions within an age group is to create appropriate playing levels that support player development. Teams must register based on birth year and divisions will be organized around age groups first. For the majority of ISL State League teams, grouping first by age divisions, then by team's playing level, will best serve the developmental aim of the league. There may be situations where some teams require additional support to assist their development and the league is prepared to make accommodations. Divisional placement will be based on two factors; age and ability.



- **Age:** the first criteria in creating divisions is by age group (i.e. birth year) and in most cases 11U – 14U, there will likely be single year divisions. In the older age groups, 15U-19U, ages at which players are becoming more physically mature, the League will consider the number of teams within an age group and the playing level of teams within an age group and from there decide whether to have single birth year divisions or to combine multiple birth years.
- **Ability:** If a team has demonstrated that it's at a higher or lower level of development than it's age group peers, the League will consider allowing the team to play up or down as outlined below.

Based on these two factors teams will have the opportunity to request to play up or play down during the registration process. You will be asked to provide supporting detail regarding your request including but not limited to team composition. Requests will be managed by the league and in concert with input from the PDAP.

Level of Commitment: Any team looking to participate in ISL State League must understand the level of commitment required to participate in a statewide league. Families must understand that this is a travel league and teams will travel to participate in ISL State League Games. The determination of game sites is based in part due to 1) inventory of home and neutral playing locations of teams within a division, 2) field availability and 3) referee availability. Club leaders must understand that all their teams may not get home games, and should educate their parents as to why (field inventory within a division, field availability on a given weekend, referee availability in the area of field availability on a given weekend, etc.) The League will attempt to contain travel as possible, while reminding participants to recognize there are multiple factors outside of the League's control.

Player eligibility within the League: ISL State League Rules allow teams to use club pass players, which is the sharing of a club's players among its teams. This allowance should result in having enough players available to compete in all matches as scheduled.

Team Blocking: The league will accommodate a 2x1 team/coach ratio. This idea accommodates two (2) teams sharing (1) coach OR (2) teams sharing players. If you need to block teams, during team entry you're either blocking by coach, or blocking by players, but not by a combination of coach/players.

Play Dates: The ISL State League calendar has evolved into having set play dates and BYE weekends. This is an important step toward alignment with US Soccer PDI's. Teams participating in the ISL State League must be available on all set 'play dates' as specified on the league calendar. Teams will be scheduled 6-10 games (based on request) across the set play dates, but depending on the number of games requested may not be scheduled a game on every play date.



Reschedules: Teams must be aware ISL State League Rules about reschedules. There will be a reschedule procedure available on the website. Only matches rescheduled due to weather/complex closures can be made at no charge.

- Reschedule with more than a 7 day notice - \$25 Admin Fee
- 1st Reschedule with less than a 7 day notice - \$40 Admin Fee
- Rescheduled matches will not be considered if less than a 3 day notice.

Referees: All ISL State League games should be officiated by the three-person FIFA/US Soccer Referee System for 11U – 19U age groups. Due to referee shortage, this is not always possible. Iowa Soccer is working with the Iowa Referee Committee (IRC) to help with retention and recruitment of referees. Occasionally ISL State League assignors are only able to find one center referee and therefore must ask teams to provide volunteer AR(s). It is rare that assignors are unable to find any referees, but should that be the case, the match can still be played as a friendly. Teams will not have to pay in situations where a referee(s) is not at a scheduled match.

Coaching Education / Recommendation & Requirement: Coaches in the ISL State League are expected to prepare and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with Iowa Soccer’s Long-term player development philosophy. Coaches play a critical role in a player’s experience and whether or not he/she keeps playing. Coach education is crucial in creating a positive training and game environment. To that end, coaches are encouraged and in some instances required to complete one of the Iowa Soccer coach education courses. Iowa Soccer will also utilize the league structure to deliver a range of coach education materials and opportunities. Minimum coaching requirements for the ISL State League are:

- 11U & 12U Coaches: Required USSF “E” License
- 13U & 14U Coaches: Required USSF “E” License / Recommended USSF “D” License
- 15U – 19U Coaches: Required USSF “E” License / Recommended USSF “D” or “C” License

**As the league evolves, for the 2017-2018 season a grace period will be offered to those coaches who do not meet the minimum requirement.*