



## Iowa Soccer League Rec Central RULES

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## **SECTION 1 Introduction**

### **1.0 Name**

The name of the league is the Iowa Soccer League Rec Central hereafter referred to as “ISL Rec Central” or “Rec Central” or “League.”

### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the ISL Rec Central is to provide opportunities to play, and to develop, promote, and administer youth soccer competition at the recreational level for the 09U-19U age groups. The League will strive to provide an enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate and competitive platform for players and coaches, while keeping administrative barriers to a minimum so kids can get on the field and games can be played.

### **1.2 League’s Association with Iowa Soccer**

The League is an Iowa Soccer property, open exclusively to Iowa Soccer member teams within and surrounding Central Iowa.

### **1.3 Goals**

The League will:

- Be developmentally appropriate
- Provide meaningful competition
- Provide improved competition formats for players to enjoy and develop
- Provide coaching education standards and resources
- Take a common sense approach to matters so as to best support a fun and developmentally appropriate playing environment

### **1.4 Management and Operations**

The League is managed and operated by Iowa Soccer staff with a designated League Director. The Iowa Soccer staff will collaborate with club technical leaders (Section 1.6) to assure maximum collaboration, teamwork and input from participating clubs.

### **1.5 Authority**

Participating clubs will be responsible for teams entering the league and ultimately will be responsible for team (player, coach, parent/supporter) actions.

The League is under the authority of the Iowa Soccer Association and its Board of Directors. Direct authority for management and operations of the League rests solely with the Iowa Soccer staff.

Iowa Soccer reserves the right to make certain decisions regarding the League, as it deems necessary, for the good of the game, in order to improve the game and/or to protect the participants. Such

decisions shall include but are not limited to: postponement or cancellation of games; rescheduling of games; changing of fields; changing of sites; fair play; unsporting behavior.

All teams submitting an entry to compete in the League thereby agree to abide by and accept the jurisdiction of the bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of the Iowa Soccer Association, the Iowa Soccer League, US Youth Soccer, US Soccer and FIFA. No official, coach, club, referee, player, team or their representatives may invoke the aid of the Courts without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate affiliated soccer organizations noted above.

## 1.6 Advisory Panel

The Iowa Soccer staff will utilize an Advisory Panel for collaboration. The panel is advisory in nature and may make recommendations, but is not a decision-making body. The panelists serve to bring their perspectives to the Iowa Soccer staff and League Director and serve as ambassadors and advocates of and for league participants.

### 1.6.1 Eligibility to serve

- Current or immediate past member of your club's board
- Current club registrar and/or club administrator
- Current club staff members and/or technical leaders

### 1.6.2 Volunteering to serve

Iowa Soccer staff will seek volunteers in advance of the terms of service.

### 1.6.3 Panel make-up

- As possible, will seek to have an even distribution of club registrars/administrators, club board members/presidents, club technical leaders.
- As possible in making selections in those categories, will seek to rotate and select so as to have a variety across clubs with teams participating in the league.

### 1.6.4 Length of service

Terms will be staggered to maintain continuity from panel to panel and will run 24 months.

### 1.6.5 Meetings

Iowa Soccer staff and the Advisory Panel will convene twice a year to discuss league matters.

## 1.7 Website

The league website will serve as the informational and promotional hub for participants and fans alike. It can be found on [www.iowasoccer.org](http://www.iowasoccer.org).



1.8 Rules changes

Rules may be updated/revised at any time. Please make it a point to review the rules prior to the opening weekend of competition for your team, and to review them regularly. A plea of ignorance to all rules and regulations governing this competition is not sufficient grounds for not following them, or to serve as the basis for a protest.

**SECTION 2 Entry and eligibility criteria**

2.0 Eligibility

Entry is accepted on a team basis and teams and players must be currently registered with Iowa Soccer in 11U-19U age groups.

2.0.1 Each team and participant must be a current member of and in good standing with Iowa Soccer.

2.1 Registration procedure

Clubs should only enter a team into the League knowing it will be able to field that team and field it in the age group selected at the time of team entry. During the registration period a designated club official will be in charge of utilizing the online team entry tool to enter all teams from the club.

2.2 Age Groups Offered

The Iowa Soccer League Rec Central offers single age group divisions for 11U, 12U, 13U and 14U in both girls and co-ed. Should there not be enough teams to form a single age group division, age divisions will be combined (11U-12U, 13U-14U). The League also offers a 16U division and a 19U division for girls and for co-ed. As necessary, small-sided divisions (7v7) will also be offered and supported in 13U-19U age groups.

2.3 Roster sizes, minimum number needed to play

- 09U-10U (7v7) maximum of 12
- 11U, 12U (9v9) maximum of 16
- 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 19U (11v11) maximum of 22, 18 "game active"
- If needed, small-sided 7v7 @ 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 19U maximum of 14

Minimum number of players needed to play

- 09U-10U playing 7v7 minimum of 6
- 11U, 12U playing 9v9 minimum of 7
- 13U-19U playing 11v11 minimum of 9
- 13U-19U playing 7v7 minimum of 6

## 2.4 Team Formation

Rec Central teams are recreational-based teams and therefore must follow Rec Central team formation rules; teams may not be formed on the basis of talent evaluation and must be formed randomly. Refer to the Iowa Soccer Association Member Rules Section 1.

- The League does try to accommodate teams classified as Level 2 with a schedule, but is primarily a league for Level 3 teams. Refer to the Iowa Soccer Association Member Rules Section 1 for classifications.

## 2.5 Multiple rostering

Starting at the 9U age group, players may be registered to two Iowa Soccer sanctioned teams at any given time during the seasonal year; this is considered multiple rostering. One team must be designated as the primary team and the other team will be designated as the secondary team.

- Each team is limited to three secondary rostered players.
- Players multiple rostered to a Level 3 team and a Level 1 or 2 will have the Level 1 or 2 team designated as their primary team

## 2.6 Selection of Team's "Playing Age Group"

The ISL L3 Central takes a common sense approach to team placement in an age group. It is a goal that by offering single playing age groups at 11U, 12U, 13U and 14U that teams are more likely to be placed in a playing group against teams of similar age and development, if not playing ability.

We know clubs sometimes must place an "older" player or two on the only team available in the age group, and which happens to be a "younger" team, in order for the older kids to have a place to play. By way of doing that, the team then must be classified as an "older" team - for example, you have a true 13U team but must place one or two true 14U players on the "younger" team's roster, which results in the team's official classification as a 14U team.

- In such "play down" instances, the allowances are
  - 12U may select to play in 11U playing age group
  - 14U may select to play in 13U playing age group
  - 15U may select to play in 14U playing age group
- Not allowed
  - 11U or 12U to play in 10U or below playing age group
  - 14U or 15U to play in 12U or below playing age group
  - 16U to play in 14U or below playing age group
  - 19U to play in 16U or below playing age group
- Unacceptable use of this selection allowance
  - It is not acceptable for a team to intentionally select "play down" when the team's developmental level supports playing in its own (or higher) playing age group. The League will monitor and track scores and address any questions or issues if they arise. Abuse of this common sense approach will not be tolerated.



- It is not allowable to place a team in a division with a different form of the game (7v7, 9v9, 11v11, etc.)
  - Example: A 13U team is not eligible to play in the 12U division

Another scenario is that a team in an age group may have an advanced development and/or wish to challenge itself by playing up one age group from its actual roster designation. For example, a true 13U team is allowed to select to play in a 14U playing age group.

- In such “play up” instances, the allowances are:
  - 11U may select to play in 12U playing age group
  - 13U may select to play in 14U playing age group
- Not allowed:
  - 09U or 10U to play in 11U or 12U playing age group
  - 11U or 12U to play in 13U or 14U playing age group
  - 13U or 14U to play in 16U or 19U playing age group

Therefore as part of the ISL L3 Central’s goal to be flexible, and to collaborate with participants, while striving “to provide an enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate and competitive platform for players...” during the team entry process:

- The Registrar/Club Administrator is asked to select the “playing age group” that is best suited to the team’s age and/or playing or developmental ability.
  - From the entry form: Select "playing age group" for this team
- Later in the entry form, will provide additional detail by selecting one of the following:
  - Entering this team one age group UP from its official age group classification
  - Entering this team in its ACTUAL age group classification
  - Entering this team one age group DOWN from its official age group classification

## 2.7 Entry Fee, Collection of

The team entry fee is \$40.00 per team, per season. Team entry fee is not due at the time of entry; Iowa Soccer will invoice clubs for their total team entries in a playing season.

## 2.8 Withdrawal of team entry

Clubs should only enter a team into the League knowing it will be able to field that team and field it in the age group selected at the time of team entry.

### 2.8.1 Team entry checkpoints

There will be a minimum of two checkpoints prior to the release of the final schedule match that a designated club official will be asked to verify its club’s entries

1. In the days immediately following the close of team entry (fall)
2. In the days immediately following the close of team entry/formation of groups (spring)
3. In the days immediately following the import of data by our scheduling partner TeamsCompete



2.8.2 Penalty for late withdraw from the league

If the League Director and scheduling partner TeamsCompete have completed the process of confirming team entries with the designated club official via the checkpoints per Section 2.8.1 and a club subsequently requests to withdraw a team, the club will be subject to a fine of \$100.00, and further consideration may be made as to the eligibility of that team and/or club to compete in the League in the next playing season.

**Section 3 League Standards and Expectations**

**3.0 Programming Guided by Iowa Soccer’s Player Pathway**



3.0.1 Focus, by Age Group

- 09U & 10U: Participation Pathway - Soccer for Life, Active for Life. The primary focus for this stage of development is to have fun while learning to train. From a soccer perspective, the focus should be on technical development and basic understanding of tactical principles in the 7v7 game format.
- 11U & 12U: Participation Pathway - Soccer for Life, Active for Life. The primary focus for this stage of development is to have fun and maintain an active



lifestyle. From a soccer perspective, the focus should be on technical development and basic understanding of tactical principles in the 9v9 game format.

- 13U thru 19U: Participation Pathway - Soccer for Life, Active for Life

This is a very unique stage of development due to the onset of growth spurts, which are generally age ranges between 11 to 15 for girls and 12 to 16 for boys. The primary focus during this stage of development is to create an enjoyable playing environment where players can continue to develop, refine, and apply their technique as well as further develop their tactical understanding of the game as they progress to the 11v11 game format. In the Participation pathway, the goal is to stay actively involved recreationally for life to promote health and for enjoyment of the sport.

### 3.1 Alliance 4 All: Practice better sportsmanship

Iowa Soccer is an Alliance 4 All-Endorsed State Association and will conduct its programming in accordance with this status. The Iowa Soccer League Rec Central will have as a minimum standard participation by league participants in the Alliance 4 All sportsmanship program.

It is the position of Iowa Soccer that the pursuits of competing and of practicing good sportsmanship are not mutually exclusive. Club officials and their technical leaders are expected to take the lead in directing their coaches, parents, spectators, players and referees to “practice better sportsmanship” as part of participation in an Iowa Soccer League competition.

### 3.2 Education: Coaches, Parents

Iowa Soccer is committed to creating a better environment by building its foundation on education. Coach and parent education are critical components of player development and enjoyment of the game and contribute to player retention. Through education, coaches and parents are better equipped to support players, while also creating more enjoyable experiences for themselves.

#### 3.2.1 Coach Education Minimum Standards

Coaches in the ISL Rec Central are expected to familiarize and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with Iowa Soccer’s Long-term Player development philosophy. Coaches play a critical role in player development and staying with the sport. In an effort to support player development, coaches are encouraged 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.

#### 3.2.2 Parent Education

Expectations of parent behavior begin with the foundation laid by the “Alliance 4 All: Practice Better Sportsmanship” program. Iowa Soccer will roll out additional parent education materials and resources during each season.

## SECTION 4 Scheduling

### 4.0 Seasons

The Iowa Soccer League Rec Central will offer a spring playing season for 09U-10U, 11U, 12U, 13U, 14U, 15U/16U combo, and High School and a fall playing season for 09U-10U, 11U, 12U, 13U, 14U, 16U and 19U.

### 4.1 Number of games

The number of league games is seven, played over an eight-week period.

### 4.2 Play dates

League games will be scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays with games starting at 1:00pm, 3:00pm or 5:00pm for 11U and above. (See section 4.2.1 below for 09U-10U group information)

4.2.1 09U and 10U groups will be scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays at the following times:

- 09U/10U Co-ed (Boys) will play on Sundays at 1:00 PM / 2:15 PM / 3:30 PM / 4:45 PM
- 09U/10U Girls will play on Saturdays at 9:00 AM / 10:15 AM / 11:30 AM / 12:45 PM

4.2.2 11U and 12U groups will be scheduled primarily on Sundays. If field constraints dictate, some games may be scheduled on Saturdays.

4.2.3 13U and 14U groups will be scheduled primarily on Saturdays. If field constraints dictate, some games may be scheduled on Sundays.

4.2.4 15U, 16U, High School and 19U groups will be scheduled primarily on Sundays. If field constraints dictate, some games may be scheduled on Saturdays.

### 4.3 Group Formation

Teams will be assembled in “playing age groups” (as per Section 2.6) and by Level 3 (or Level 2) team formation classification. The goals with group formation are to address travel considerations within a “playing age group” in the fall season, and in the spring season to create groups of “like” playing level teams, without limits on travel considerations shaping the schedule.

4.3.1 In the fall season, Groups are primarily formed by grouping “like” playing level teams within a “playing age group” first. Keeping teams in close proximity to opponents will be factored second.

4.3.2 In the spring season, Groups are primarily formed by grouping “like” playing level teams, within a “playing age group”.



4.3.3 During the team entry process, the club official designated to enter his/her club's teams will be asked to characterize the makeup of each team's spring roster, and also indicate the playing ability of the spring roster by way of selecting a preferred Group in which it would like each team to be placed.

#### 4.4 Travel distances

In any given season, team entries may create instances where a longer distance match may be on a team's schedule. League officials will attempt to minimize these instances, however league participants will need to understand and accept that the number of teams entered in each group and where they are from may not result, from time to time, in perfect close proximity-based schedules in the fall season.

4.4.1 The use of neutral sites will be considered in the event that a game match-up involves a significant travel distance. During the team entry process, each club will indicate its willingness to play a game at a neutral site *if needed*. During the scheduling review process, League officials will consult a team's willingness to play at a neutral site and contact the involved coaches if interest is indicated to confirm the location of the match.

#### 4.5 Responsibility for scheduling

Iowa Soccer will be responsible for creating the League's playing schedule

#### 4.6 Rescheduling allowance and notification of

Team coaches have the autonomy and flexibility to reschedule matches as needed. The flexibility and structure of the League is intended to help minimize the necessity to reschedule, however coaches have this available should it be necessary.

4.6.1 In order to maintain the integrity of and confidence in the public, online schedule, when a reschedule has been confirmed by coaches from each team, the HOME TEAM coach must submit the update to the League Director via an online form. Information should be submitted as soon as the change is confirmed and no later than NOON on the Friday before the game.

Information needed to submit game change:

- Original game information - age group, home and away club and team names, date, time, location, TourneyMachine match number, and field designation
- Rescheduled game information -- date, time, location and field designation

**SECTION 5 Specifications & Requirements: rosters, games, fields/equipment, offside**

**5.0 Comprehensive Chart of Standards and Requirements**



**Iowa Soccer League Level 3 Central - Standards**

	09U and 10U	11U and 12U	13U and 14U	16U	19U	13U and 14U small sided 7v7	16U and 19U small sided 7v7
Field:Length Range	55-65	70-80	100-120	100-120	100-120	70-80	70-80
Field:Width Range	35-45	45-55	55-80	55-80	55-80	45-55	45-55
Number of Players	7v7	9v9	11v11	11v11	11v11	7v7	7v7
Maximum Roster Size	12	16	22 max 18 "game active"	22 max 18 "game active"	22 max 18 "game active"	14	14
GK	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Playing Time (Minutes)	2x25	2x30	2x35	2x40	2x45	2x35	2x40
Break Time (Minutes)	10	10	15	15	15	10	10
Ball Size	4	4	5	5	5	5	5
Goal Size (Feet)	6.5x18.5	6.5x18.5	8x24	8x24	8x24	6.5x18.5	6.5x18.5
Offside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**5.1 Field inventory**

In order to provide requisite numbers of fields for league play, each club will submit one available field for every up to six of its team entries in an age group. For each age group in which the club has a team entered, it must provide a field of the corresponding size. If a club enters more than six teams in a single age group, it must provide a second field for league play.

**5.1.1 Field inventory submission requirements, timeline**

Club officials will be asked to complete a field inventory form as provided by the League Director. The deadline for field inventory collection will coincide with the deadline date for team entry confirmation.



5.2 Team benches and spectator sideline

Players and team officials will be positioned on one sideline that is opposite the spectator sideline. It is not permissible for spectators to be positioned behind the team benches.

**SECTION 6 Referees**

6.0 System for assigning

Each club will be responsible for assigning, managing and paying for Referees for any game played at their home complex involving a team from their club. Assignments must be made by a US Soccer-certified assignor.

- It is best practice for the referees to be older than the age group to which they are assigned.

6.1 Certified referees required

Games will be assigned to certified Referees by a certified assignor and will use the diagonal system of control (3-person crew).

- A two-person system is not allowed.
- If there is a referee no-show at the game, non-certified volunteers may be used so the game may be played.

Number of referees assigned to a match, by age group/form of the game

- 09U, 10U (playing 7v7) one referee
- 11U, 12U (playing 9v9) three referees
- 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 19U (playing 11v11) three referees
- 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 19U (playing 7v7) one referee

6.2 Pay scale

There currently is no league-wide pay scale for referees. Clubs will determine its referee fees.

6.3 Method of payment

Each club may determine how and when it pays for Referees who have officiated games played at the club’s home complex.

6.4 No-shows

The expectation of referees is that they honor their game assignment. If a referee(s) does not show at the game, the home club must submit this information to the League Director via online form so the League can track and take action to support where necessary.

- If the crew is missing a referee, volunteers may be used so the game may be played.
- If the entire crew does not show, the coaches may discuss and if agreed, play the game as a friendly match.

### 6.5 Notification to referees if game is cancelled/rescheduled

If a game is cancelled or rescheduled, it is the responsibility of the home club's coach to notify his/her club's referee coordinator immediately.

### 6.6 Participant obligation to referees

Participants in a match - coaches/team officials, players and parents/spectators - should read and be familiar with the rules governing the League. Following from that, the expectations of being a participant in an Iowa Soccer competition are high and begin with treating the match and the referees with respect, and to the Alliance 4 All initiative to "practice better sportsmanship" at all times. While there are many "gamesmanship" actions that are accepted as part of the soccer culture, all participants must keep at the forefront the understanding that this is a youth sport and that the adults in particular should be modeling respectful treatment of referees.

### 6.7 Referee obligation to participants

Referees should know which rules are to be applied to an ISL Rec Central match. We recognize most referees officiate games outside of this League, many of which are governed by different rules. No matter, the first obligation referees have to ISL Rec Central participants is to ensure he/she has prepared for the match by reviewing these rules. As one of four participants in a match, and in accordance with Alliance 4 All, referees are expected to set the tone of the game by "practicing better sportsmanship". Manage the match in a calm, confident manner, model good sportsmanship and from there set the expectations for the players, coaches and parents/spectators.

### 6.8 A Referee's reporting requirements

Send-offs, Forfeit, Abandoned game

- In the event of any of the above, the Referee must submit a report to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game. Email to Collin Hemann, [chemann@iowasoccer.org](mailto:chemann@iowasoccer.org).

## SECTION 7 Required Game Credentials

### 7.0 Team roster, player and coach passes, guest player credential (if applies)

Prior to each match the Referee will conduct the pre-game check in with the players and coaches. Coaches must present to the Referee a team roster, a player pass (a.k.a. player card) for each player, a "hard pass" for each coach and, if applicable, an Iowa Soccer-approved guest player approval credential and that player's player pass from his/her regular season team (Section 8).

#### 7.0.1 Team roster

The Referee will use the Iowa Soccer-approved roster to compare the player cards and coach passes during the pregame check-in. A coach has three roster options to present to the Referee



- A printed version of the Iowa Soccer-approved roster. These are easily obtainable, generally as a .pdf, from his/her club registrar.
  1. It is recommended that the team coach provide printed rosters to each assistant coach and team managers and instruct them to also bring to every match if needed for back-up.
  2. It is also recommended that the team coach and assistants/managers keep the .pdf version on a mobile device.
- An electronic version of the Iowa Soccer-approved roster. The coach may utilize a hand-held device such as a smartphone, tablet or laptop, or if a team or club official onsite has access to the club's LeagueOne login credentials, may pull up the roster and show to the Referee.
- If neither are available, the coach may handwrite the roster and submit to the Referee prior to kickoff. The Referee must submit the roster to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game. It is suggested that if the Referee has a smartphone, he/she take a picture of the roster and email to the League Director while still onsite ([chemann@iowasoccer.org](mailto:chemann@iowasoccer.org)). Information on the hand-written roster needs to include:
  - a. Age group, club name, team name
  - b. First, last name of each player
  - c. Reference to the game: game date, time, field and the two teams involved

#### 7.0.1.1 For 13U-above teams with more than 18 players on their roster

In the 13U-above full-sided groups (i.e., playing 11v11), a team's maximum roster size is 22. However, only 18 players may be designated as "game active" for a given game. Therefore prior to each match, any 13U-above team with more than 18 on the roster must indicate the game active players by way of striking out the names of the remaining players who are "inactive" for that match. Those names not stricken are the "game active" and may be up to 18 total players for the game.

7.0.2 Iowa Soccer-issued player passes must be presented, with photos, for each player prior to the match. In the event the coach cannot provide the player passes at pregame check-in or by the scheduled kick-off time, the Referee should adhere to the following

- Instruct the coach that if he/she can produce the player passes by the end of the match, and if the coach is confident the player passes for each player at the game will show the player is of the correct age group and club and on that team (with guest player exception), the game will kick off as scheduled and will be played
  - If the player passes are not produced by the end of the game, the game will be recorded as a forfeit



- If the coach can produce most, but not all, player passes, the game will be recorded as a forfeit. All passes for the players present at the game must be produced.
- The Referee must report the forfeit to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game. The Referee report should include the reason given by the coach that he/she indicated passes would be produced by the end of the game, but were not.
- If the coach indicates during the pregame check-in that the player passes cannot be produced, the Referee will have the game proceed as scheduled, but inform the coach it will be recorded as a forfeit.
  - The Referee must report the forfeit to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game. The Referee report should include the reason given by the coach that the player passes could not be produced.

### 7.0.3 Coach hard passes

Each coach must present his/her “hard pass” (plastic) to the Referee during pregame check-in. After it is presented, the coach should wear the pass on the Iowa Soccer-branded lanyard during the game so that it is visible or can be pulled out from under outerwear and quickly displayed upon request. This is a risk-management issue and compliance is expected.

- If the coach indicates during pregame check-in that he/she cannot produce his/her coach pass, the Referee should adhere to the following
  - Instruct the coach that if he/she can produce the coach pass by the end of the game, the game will kick off as scheduled and will be played.
  - If the pass is not produced by the end of the game, the game will be recorded as a forfeit.
- If the game is played and the coach does not produce the pass, the Referee must report the name of the coach to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game, [chemann@iowasoccer.org](mailto:chemann@iowasoccer.org). The Director will follow-up with the coach and club registrar to verify the coach’s status and eligibility to be on the sideline with the team.
- If it is found a coach knowingly told a Referee that he/she has a coach pass but in actuality does not, the coach will be subject to immediate and severe penalty.
  - This is a risk-management issue and Iowa Soccer has zero tolerance for abuse of this requirement



## SECTION 8 Guest Player Allowance

### 8.0 The Guest Player Allowance

#### What it IS

- This allowance is a tool for coaches to use to ensure they have enough players and/or substitutes at a game so that the game doesn't have to be rescheduled, thus eliminating the work involved for coaches to reschedule.
- The tool is not a guaranteed answer to all scenarios, or to last-minute changes in player availability, but if planned for and used properly, the allowance should minimize the need to reschedule. In cases where the allowance can't be applied, coaches are still able to reschedule matches.
- Maximum number of guest players in a match is three.

#### What it is NOT

- If the team has enough players and substitutes to play a match, the guest player allowance is NOT to be used.
- This allowance is NOT a tool for coaches to use to "stack" a roster with "ringer" type players just because the allowance exists or just because there is room on the team to still be under/within the maximum roster size.
- The tool is NOT to be used to gain a competitive advantage.

### 8.1 Abuse of allowance

Abuse of the spirit or letter of this allowance will not be tolerated and will be dealt with harshly. Iowa Soccer will monitor guest player requests and impose strict penalties in the event a coach or club is found to have been abusing or finding ways around the allowance. Penalties for abuse will include, but are not restricted to

#### 8.1.1 Team's/Team Coach's first offense

The **team loses the allowance** for the remainder of the season. If it happens in the last game of the season, the penalty will follow the team and/or coach and be applied in the next season.

#### 8.1.2 Team's/Team Coach's second offense

The **club loses this allowance** for the remainder of the season. If it happens in the last game of the season, the penalty will be applied club-wide for the entirety of the next season.

## 8.2 Eligibility

8.2.1 Guest players must be currently registered with your club and Iowa Soccer.

8.2.2 For Rec Central teams, only Level 3 players may be guests. Level 2 and 1 players are NOT permitted as guest players.

8.2.3 For Level 2 teams, players may be registered as Level 3 or Level 2, but may not be registered as Level 1.

8.2.4 Guest players must be age eligible and developmentally appropriate for the age group the team is playing in.

- 09U-10U player for 09U-10U games
- 11U-12U player for 11U-12U games
- 11U-14U player for 13U-14U games
- 13U-16U player for 16U games
- 13U-19U player for 19U games

### 8.2.4.1 Guest players and the team's playing age group

Although the League allows a team to “play down” an age group because it is more developmentally appropriate for the team, as per Section 2.6, it is not an acceptable application of the guest player allowance to use an eligible age group player who is more advanced developmentally than the age group in which the team seeking the guest player plays.

- The common sense guideline is if the player “plays up” because of ability, that player should not be used to guest play, even though the player is of eligible age for the game.

### 8.2.4.2 The following other “play down” scenarios are not allowed

- A true 11U-12U player is not eligible to guest play in a 10U or younger game.
- A true 13U-14U player is not eligible to guest play in a 12U or younger game.
- A true 15U-16U player is not eligible to guest play in a 14U or younger game.
- A true 17U-19U player is not eligible to guest play in a 16U or younger game.

## 8.3 Spirit of the Allowance

Do not abuse the spirit of the allowance in order to gain a competitive advantage in your game. Abuse of the allowance will result in strict penalties. The allowance's intent is to help take the burden of rescheduling off volunteer coaches; having up to three additional player options to add to your team so that a match can be played as scheduled is the foundation of the allowance. In the spirit of fair play, the allowance is guided by replacing a “like player” with a “like player” and, only in the event you need guest players.



8.3.1 The allowance is not to be used to replace players on your team who can be at the game. You may use the allowance only after you have asked all players on your team if they are available to play in your next League match and you have determined you'll be missing too many, and that the use of guest players will therefore allow the game to be played as scheduled.

8.3.2 The allowance is not to be used so a coach can intentionally "stack" a team by seeking out and adding "ringers" as guest players (i.e. strong and/or above average ability for the team's age group).

#### 8.4 Maximum roster size applies

When requesting guest players, coaches must adhere to the maximum roster sizes, as per Section 2.3.

#### 8.5 Guest Player Form timeline requirement

Minimum 24 hours prior to the game, coaches must submit their requests via the online Guest Player Form. If a guest player request has not been submitted, or submitted by the 24-hour deadline, the player is not eligible to guest play that weekend. The coach's submission of the online Guest Player Form will be emailed in real time to the League Director and immediately forwarded to your club's registrar.

#### 8.6 Last minute situations

Should "last minute" situations arise after the 24-hour deadline, coaches are not allowed to solicit guest players "on the fly." Meeting the established deadline and eligibility requirements is the only way coaches may use the guest player allowance.

If losing a player(s) at the last minute results in your team not having enough to players to play, then the coach must contact the opposing coach immediately to explain the situation and attempt to reschedule the game.

#### 8.7 Information needed to submit a guest player request, via Iowa Soccer's online form:

- Coach name, contact information
- Iowa Soccer Team ID number
- Additional team, game and opponent information (age group, time/date/location of match, opponent's club)
- Regular-season roster size
- Reasons for using Guest Player Allowance
- Name and birth year of the guest players who are currently registered with your club and Iowa Soccer, and who are eligible for the age group
- Names of the players from your regular-season roster who are not able to be at the game

## 8.8 Compliance and Approval

Iowa Soccer monitors the use of the guest player allowance and the scores of teams who use it. Any data points that indicate repeated use by a team and/or a lopsided score by a team using the guest player allowance will automatically trigger further investigation.

Iowa Soccer has the final authority over the eligibility of guest players.

## 8.9 Guest player game credentials

Once the guest player form is submitted, the coach will receive an automatic email response indicating approval, which is a required game credential to show to Referees during pregame. The guest player must also present his/her player pass. In the absence of either credential detailed below, the guest player may not play in that match.

8.9.1 The automatic email response serves as the Guest Player Game Approval credential the coach must present to the Referee crew prior to the match; print this response and bring it to the game.

In the event the coach does not have the paper copy, he/she may present the email approval on a mobile device.

8.9.2 Guest players must bring to the match their current player pass for his/her regular-season team. It must be presented to the Referee crew prior to the match.

## SECTION 9 Playing Rules

9.0 FIFA Laws of the Game except as noted herein

9.1 Game length

- 09U-10U (Two 25-minute halves)
- 11U-12U (Two 30-minute halves)
- 13U-14U (Two 35-minute halves)
- 13U-14U Small-sided 7v7 (Two 35-minute halves)
- 15U/16U (Two 40-minute halves)
- 15U/16U Small sided 7v7 (Two 40-minute halves)
- 19U (Two 45-minute halves)
- 19U Small-Sided/High School Small-Sided 7v7 (Two 40-minute halves)

9.2 Overtime

Overtime is not played if the game is tied at the end of regulation time, and the result of the game is recorded as a tie.



### 9.3 Goalkeeper distribution **APPLIES TO 9U-10U AGE GROUPS ONLY** (added 6/26/2017)

Goalkeepers are not allowed to punt or drop-kick, and training should be focused upon throwing and using their feet with the ball on the ground to transition play to the attack.

9.3.1 If a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt or drop-kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

9.3.2 Referees must be flexible when enforcing the 6-second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build-out line.

9.3.3 Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build-out line. However, the goalkeeper is allowed to put the ball into play sooner, but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.

### 9.4 Build-out line (**APPLIES TO 9U-10U AGE GROUPS ONLY**): Goalkeeper possession (hands) and goal kicks (added 6/26/2017)

As per US Soccer: “the build-out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.”

The ISL Rec Central requires that the opponent “drops off” to the build-out line when the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands, and on all goal kicks. The defending team may not release from the half line until the ball has been played. Referees will be instructed to strictly enforce this rule. This rule is designed encourage the development of building play out of the back.

- For Fall 2017, the build-out line will be the half line!
- For goalkeeper distribution as it relates to the build-out line, see 9.3.3

### 9.5 Offside (added 6/26/2017)

As per US Soccer mandates, 09U-10U will now play with the offside law. The build-out line is the offside line.

9.5.1 Offside will be called for all age groups 09U-19U.

### 9.6 Small-sided forms of the game

- 09U and 10U age groups will play 7v7 (6 field players plus a goalkeeper) on a modified-sized field with modified goals. Refer to Section 5.0 for dimensions.
- 11U and 12U age groups will play 9v9 (8 field players plus a goalkeeper) on a modified-sized field with modified goals. Refer to Section 5.0 for dimensions.

- Small-sided age groups will be supported in 13U, 14U, 16U and 19U as needed and will feature 7v7 (6 field players plus a goalkeeper) on a modified-sized field. Refer to Section 5.0 for dimensions.

## 9.7 Forfeits

### 9.7.1 Failure to show

A minimum number of players constitutes a team (see Section 2.3); a team with the minimum number of players present must start the game at the scheduled time. If the minimum number of players are not available, a 15-minute grace period will be extended beyond the scheduled kick-off time. If at the end of the 15-minute grace period the team does not have the minimum number of players, the Referee will suspend the game and report it as a forfeit to the League Director. For the purposes of score reporting, the match will be recorded as a 1-0 (forfeit).

### 9.7.2 Ineligible player, coach or team official

If it is determined that an ineligible player or coach participates in an ISL L3 Central match, the match will be forfeited. Any team, coach and/or team official found guilty of knowingly using an ineligible player or having an ineligible coach on the sideline will be subject to strict disciplinary action that could include additional sanctions for the club.

## 9.8 Completed game

Any game that has started the second half of play is considered a completed game, so if suspended for any reason it will stand as such and not be rescheduled. If the game is suspended prior to the start of the second half, it will be rescheduled and restarted from the beginning.

## 9.9 Substitutions

Substitutions may occur for either team at any stoppage of play, at the direction of the referee. There are no restrictions on the number of substitutions, in keeping with the league rule that players must get 50% playing time in a game (Section 9.10).

9.9.1 If the referee has issued a caution to a player, only the player cautioned may be substituted for at that stoppage.

## 9.10 Playing time requirement

All players must receive 50% playing time in a game. If a coach is managing a disciplinary situation with a player, the player may receive less than 50% playing time. Prior to the game the coach must inform the parents, the referee and the opposing coach of this disciplinary status. If the incident occurs during the game, the coach must inform the referee and opposing coach of the decision.

## 9.11 Game ball

Each team should have a properly inflated game ball provided to the Referee prior to the start of the match. The Referee will decide which ball to put into play.



### 9.12 Game Credentials

During pregame of the match, the Referee will conduct the team check-in at which time the credentials (Section 7) must be presented: team roster (including designation of the up to 18 “game active players” for any 13U-above teams with more than 18 on its roster), player passes, including for any guest player, the Iowa Soccer-Approved Guest Player credential if applicable and the “hard pass” for each coach.

### 9.13 Team Uniforms and Player Equipment

Each player of a team is required to wear “like” uniforms within a team (jerseys and socks especially).

#### 9.13.1 Uniforms

Each jersey should have a visible number that is different from the number of every other player on the team. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from any other players and game officials; numbers for GK jerseys are optional. There is no requirement for home (wearing light color) and away (wearing dark color). As long as the colors between the teams are easy to distinguish, that is the requirement, particularly sock color (which aids the Referee in making calls). The Referee will be the final authority on uniform colors. Should a change of jerseys be directed, the home team must change into an alternate jersey color.

#### 9.13.2 Equipment

Wearing age- and size-appropriate shin guards will be enforced by referees, and goalkeepers are encouraged to wear gloves to help ensure their safety. Casts are allowed if properly padded, keeping in mind the safety not only of the player wearing the cast, but of the other players. Referees will be the final authority of properly-sized guards and properly-padded casts. If a Referee points out non-compliance, the player will be given the opportunity to comply before any final decision is made regarding his/her ineligibility to play in the game.

### 9.14 Heading Restrictions and Limitations

As per the Iowa Soccer Concussion Management Policy, heading is not allowed in 09U-10U games or at practices.

9.14.1 Penalty for intentional heading – referees have/should be instructed to handle in the following manner (added 6/26/2017)

- Outside goal area = indirect free kick, from spot of offense
- Within goal area = indirect free kick, on goal area line parallel to the goal line at point nearest spot of offense
- If not deliberate, play should continue
- Two exceptions when “advantage” should be played
  - Deliberate, but errant header results in an own goal. Referee allows goal.



- Deliberate, but errant header goes directly to attacker who “easily” shoots and scores. Referee allows goal.

#### 9.14.2 11U and younger age groups

Heading is not allowed -- at practices or in games

#### 9.14.3 12U, 13U, 14U age groups

Heading is allowed in games. Heading is limited at practices to 15-20 headers per player, per week

##### 9.14.3.1 Younger players “playing up”

If a 10 year old player is playing up in an older age group (i.e. 10 year old playing on a 12U team), the player should not be heading the ball even if playing in an age group that permits heading.

- Parents are responsible for educating their child that they are not yet old enough to head the ball, and to communicate with the child’s coach that he/she will not be heading the ball in practices or games. Coaches must adhere to the rules restricting 10 year olds from heading the ball, so will need to be aware of who those kids are on their roster, if any.

#### 9.14.4 15U and older age groups

There are no limitations or restrictions at practices or in games.

#### 9.15 Concussions, possible head injuries and returning to play

Refer to the Iowa Soccer Concussion Management Policy for requirements on returning to play.

#### 9.16 Cautions, send-offs

Players or coaches/team officials who are sent off must immediately leave the field and the match. He/she may not remain at the match, must leave it in a timely manner, and must be out of sight and out of sound of the match. He/she may receive additional suspension or sanctioning if he/she does not comply or is found to have returned within sight and/or sound of the match.

A referee’s decision regarding a send-off is final and may not be protested.

9.16.1 A team may not substitute for a player who is sent off, and the team will play down a player for the remainder of that match.

9.16.2 As per the IFAB Laws of the Game for 2019-2020, when a coach is being sent off from the match, the referee does present a red card. Therefore, if the coach is instructed by the Referee to leave the match, it is considered that the coach has been sent off **\*Updated Fall 2019\***



9.16.3 Teams and coaches will take one side of the field and parents/spectators will be on the opposite side of the field. Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team -- such as relatives and spectators -- will also be subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the Iowa Soccer League Rec Central rules, associated Iowa Soccer rules and policies, and to the authority of League officials and game referees. Any coach or team official will be responsible for the actions of any individual(s) at any match that in the opinion of League officials or game referees is a supporter of that team.

9.16.3.1 Coaches or team officials who are sent off for the action(s) of any such individual(s) at a match are subject to the same penalties as detailed in these rules.

9.16.4 A send-off in a match carries with it the ineligibility for the player or coach/team official to participate in the next immediately-following League match with that team

9.16.4.1 The one game suspension follows the team within League play, therefore if the player or coach/team official plays or coaches with a different team in the League, the suspension is not in effect for that other team, nor does it follow if the next scheduled match for the team with which the sendoff was issued is outside the League schedule (a tournament, for example).

9.16.4.2 If the send-off occurs in the last game of the League season, the suspension will follow the player or coach/team official to the immediately following season's first League match.

9.16.5 At the discretion of the League Director, the suspension may be increased and a player or coach/team official may receive a more than one game suspension.

9.16.6 The Referee must submit a report, including the name of the player or coach/team official that was sent off, to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday following the game.

## 9.17 Referee Authority

From the time the Referee enters the playing field or its vicinity and until the Referee leave the playing field or the next game begins, the Referee will have the authority to caution or send off any player, coach/team official or spectator. This authority extends to before, during and after game play, and the entire vicinity of the game field, including the entire location of the field, the entire park, facility or complex, and parking lots. The Referee is further given the authority to order off the field or its entire vicinity and parking areas any player, coach/team official or spectator who, in the Referee's judgment, is acting in a manner that is detrimental to the game.

## **SECTION 10 Scores and standings**

### **10.0 Reporting**

- Team Manager or Coach of first team listed (Home team) will report score after completion of match through the TourneyMachine schedule.
  - Open up the schedule, “Public Results”
  - Locate your division
  - Locate your match
  - Click on the “green” icon to post score
- Scores will be collected and posted publicly, but standings will not be kept or posted. Scores will be used as data points, if necessary, in helping to form “like playing level” groups for the spring season, and to help monitor allowances such as “playing age group” selection and “guest players”.

### **10.1 League points, standings**

The ISL Rec Central League does not keep or post standings, as the cornerstones of the League are having fun and developing players while creating a positive playing environment.

The purpose of the ISL Rec Central is to provide opportunities to play, and to develop, promote, and administer youth soccer competition at the recreational level for the 11U-19U age groups. The League will strive to provide an enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate and competitive platform for players and coaches, while keeping administrative barriers to a minimum so kids can get on the field and games can be played.

## **SECTION 11 Conduct and Discipline**

### **11.0 Sportsmanship expectations**

Iowa Soccer is an Alliance 4 All-Endorsed State Association and will conduct its programs in accordance with this standard. Expectations of players, coaches, referees and parents/supporters are high and reflected throughout these rules as “practicing better sportsmanship”. Developing the culture of good sportsmanship is a vital part of the League.

### **11.1 Send-offs**

Refer to Section 9.16

### **11.2 Disciplinary Committee**

Any player or coach/team official found to violate any League, Iowa Soccer Association, US Youth Soccer, or US Soccer Bylaws, Rules or Policies, or the FIFA Laws of the Game, may be subject to a hearing in front of a disciplinary committee.



If necessary, the league director will convene a disciplinary committee comprised of:

- Three members designated by the League Director from the Advisory Panel; designees may not have any affiliation with those brought before the panel
- The League Director will serve as the mediator (will not vote)

#### 11.3 Disciplinary Committee procedures

- The committee may call any witness to document the case
- The alleged violator may call any witness to document the case
- After hearing all evidence presented, the disciplinary committee will make a determination of the discipline to be handed out.
- Unless the violated rules have a specific punishment the disciplinary committee will determine the punishment, which may be any of the following:
  - Verbal/Written Warning
  - Suspension
  - Removal from the league

## **SECTION 12 Protests and Appeals**

### 12.0 Investigation

It is the responsibility of the League Director to investigate a properly-lodged protest within the timetable as laid out herein. Failure of the parties involved to cooperate with such investigation will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

### 12.1 Decision

All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors, to interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest concerning an Iowa Soccer League 9U-10U Central game will be referred to the League Director. Decisions will be made by the League Director and will be binding on all parties.

12.1.1 A plea of ignorance to all rules and regulations governing this League is not sufficient grounds for a protest.

12.1.2 A referee's judgment will not be a basis for protests and a referee's decision will be final. This includes, but is not limited to, cautions or send-offs for players, coaches/team officials or parents/spectators.

12.1.3 Misapplication of the Laws of the Game (LOTG) may be a valid basis for a protest. Misapplication of the LOTG is different from a referee's judgment call.

#### 12.1.4 To be valid and eligible for consideration

- A protest relating to grounds, goal posts or bars, or other appurtenances of the game will be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the Referee and with the opposing coach prior to the start of the game by a coach/team official listed on the team's Iowa Soccer-approved roster from the involved game.
- In any other instances, a protest must be verbally lodged by a coach/team official listed on the team's Iowa Soccer-approved roster from the involved game with the Referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play, or before leaving the game site at the conclusion of the match.

#### 12.2 Filing a protest

- The League Director must be notified, in writing ([chemann@iowasoccer.org](mailto:chemann@iowasoccer.org)) or verbally, of the intent to lodge a protest by 10 pm on the date of the match.
- Protest may be filed only by a coach/team official listed on the team's Iowa Soccer-approved roster
- The protest must be filed with the League Director within 24 hours after the completion of the game being protested and include:
  - A fee in the amount of \$250.00
  - A written protest which must clearly articulate the disputed matter and include the grounds on which the protest is lodged
  - A written copy of any information to be presented by witnesses.
- After having received a properly lodged protest, the League Director will notify the team/party against which such protest is made, who will have the right to defend its case. A copy of the written protest will be provided to the other involved team/party.
- A lawyer will not represent a team/party at a hearing unless he or she is a bona fide member of one of the teams/parties concerned.