



**ONTARIO
SOCCER**
EST. 1901

2026 – 2027 Operational Procedures

Section 6 – Leagues

SECTION 6 – LEAGUES

PROCEDURE 1.0 – Pyramid For Play

- 1.1 The Pyramid for Play in Ontario is a hierarchy of Leagues structured in such a way as to provide opportunities for competition at Local, District, Regional and Provincial Levels.
- 1.2 This is done by:
- Providing a progressive structure of Leagues from the Local level to the Provincial level;
 - Developing policies governing entry to, and participation in, each level of the League system to ensure that progressively higher demands on skill and competitive ability are required at higher levels of the Pyramid; and
 - Striving to ensure competitive balance within each League and among all Leagues at the same level in the Pyramid.

PROCEDURE 2.0 – League Categories

- 2.1 A League Category is defined by its:
- League Level
 - League Status
 - League Classification
 - League Playing Season
 - League Gender
 - League Age Division
- 2.2 Subject to the approval of its Governing Organization and the Published Rules, a League may be categorized under one (1) or more different types of League Level, League Status, League Classification, League Playing Season, League Gender, and League Age Division.
- 2.3 With the exception of "Leagues above Ontario Soccer Pyramid Structure", the levels of play within the Pyramid for Play will be based on the League Levels. In the Soccer for Life Youth Pyramid for Play, a Youth Regional League will provide the highest level of competition; In the Senior Pyramid for Play, a Senior Provincial League will provide the highest level of competition.
- 2.4 A League may operate other age division(s) as approved by its Governing Organization.
- 2.5 Leagues in Ontario are structured as per the table below:

League Level	League Status	League Classification	League Playing Season	League Gender	League Age Divisions	League Governance
Leagues Above or Outside Ontario Soccer Pyramid for Play Structure - International Leagues and National Leagues	Amateur, Professional or Semi-Professional	Senior Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Open Age	
					Under 19 to Under-23	
	Amateur, Professional or Semi-Professional	Senior Indoor or Senior Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Open Age	
					Under 19 to Under-23	
Amateur	Youth Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Under 15 to Under-18		
Amateur	Youth Indoor or Youth Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Under 15 to Under-18		



Senior Provincial League <i>*Provincial Pro-Am League must include semi-professional teams and may include amateur teams</i>	Amateur	Senior Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Open Age	Only 1 Provincial League permitted
	May only include amateur teams				Under 19 to Under-21	
	Pro-Am	Senior Indoor or Senior Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Open Age	
					Under 19 to Under-21	
Ontario Player Development League	Amateur	Youth Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Under-13 to Under-17	

League Level	League Status	League Classification	League Playing Season	League Gender	League Age Divisions	League Governance
Senior Regional League	Amateur	Senior Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Open Age	
					Under-19 to Under-21	
		Senior Indoor or Senior Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Open Age	
					Under-19 to Under-21	
Youth Regional League	Amateur	Youth Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Under-14 to Under-18	
		Youth Indoor or Youth Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Under-14 to Under-18	
Senior District Competitive League	Amateur	Senior Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Open Age	Only 1 District Competitive League permitted to operate in each District
					Under-19 to Under-21	
		Senior Indoor or Senior Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Open Age	
					Under-19 to Under-21	
Youth District Competitive League	Amateur	Youth Outdoor Competitive	Outdoor	Male or Female	Under-14 to Under-18	Only 1 District



		Youth Indoor or Youth Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Under-14 to Under-18	Competitive League permitted to operate in each District
Senior District Recreational League	Amateur	Senior Outdoor Recreational	Outdoor	Male or Female	Open Age	District Association may approve the operation of one (1) or more District Recreational League(s)
					Under-19 to Under-21	
		Senior Indoor or Senior Futsal	Indoor	Male or Female	Open Age	
					Under-19 to Under-21	

League Level	League Status	League Classification	League Playing Season	League Gender	League Age Divisions	League Governance
Senior Local League	Amateur	Senior Outdoor Recreational (11-a-side) or Senior Outdoor Recreational (5-a-side)	Outdoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Open Age Under-19 to Under-21 Over-30 Over-35 Over-40 Over-45 Over-50	District Association may approve the operation of one (1) or more Local League(s)
		Senior Indoor or Senior Futsal	Indoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Open Age Under-19 to Under-21 Over-30 Over-35 Over-40 Over-45 Over-50	
Youth Interlock League	Amateur	Youth Outdoor Recreational	Outdoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Under-14 to Under-18	District Association may approve the



		Youth Indoor or Youth Futsal	Indoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Under-14 to Under-18	operation of one (1) or more Interlock Leagues
Grassroots District Development League	Amateur	Fundamentals/Learn To Train Outdoor	Outdoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Under-8 to Under-13	
		Fundamentals/Learn To Train Indoor/Futsal	Indoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Under-8 to Under-13	
Grassroots Local League	Amateur	Fundamentals/Learn To Train Outdoor	Outdoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Under-8 to Under-13	
		Fundamentals/Learn To Train Indoor/Futsal	Indoor	Male, Female, or Mixed	Under-8 to Under-13	

PROCEDURE 3.0 – League Functions And Operations

3.1 A League shall:

- a) Be required to obtain permission from its Governing Organization to operate on an annual basis and shall operate under the jurisdiction and supervision of its Governing Organization.
- b) Affiliate, as an Associate Member, with a Governing Organization and be subject to the Governing Documents of that organization and all higher Governing Organizations. Such delegation may be withdrawn at any time with proper notice and reason.
- c) Provide scheduled games for its members, in a division(s) or conference(s).
- d) Consist of Clubs as members.

3.2 A League shall provide annually to its Governing Organization:

- a) A copy of the latest publication of its Constitution
- b) A list of its Officers
- c) A financial statement on its previous year's operations
- d) Additional items to be submitted as required by the Governing Organization

3.3 A League shall approve the applications of Clubs to enter teams in its League based on:

- a) Its membership criteria and requirements which are annually approved by its Governing Organization;
- b) Subject to any appeal to, and final approval from, it's Governing Organization.

3.4 The following teams are eligible to play in Leagues:

- a) Club Teams

3.5 A League may:



- a) Provide cup competitions for its teams only, and following completion of its regularly scheduled games may provide a play-off competition or similar format of play.
- b) Host a tournament in accordance with Ontario Soccer policies and procedures governing tournaments.
- c) Set a deadline after which no Players can be added to a team's roster for playing games in that League.

3.6 The following Leagues:

- a) District Competitive Outdoor League
- b) Regional Outdoor League
- c) Provincial Outdoor League
 - i. Shall have competitive divisions comprised of competitive teams. There is no promotion and relegation of the teams between the competitive divisions and the recreational divisions except where stipulated below;
 - ii. District Competitive League which is governed by a District Association, and which includes both District Competitive and District Recreational Divisions may be given permission by its District Association to have promotion and relegation between the District Competitive and District Recreational Divisions.

3.7 **Provincial, Regional** or (if governed directly by Ontario Soccer) **District Competitive Leagues** may either be:

- a) Run directly by Ontario Soccer under the supervision of a League Board/Executive/League Governing Committee appointed by Ontario Soccer, (If run directly by Ontario Soccer, the rules of the League shall be as set out in the Operational Procedures of Ontario Soccer), or
- b) Run as a separate entity with its own By-Laws, Operational Procedures annually delegated to another League to operate, (If run as a separate entity, or if delegated to another League to operate, the League shall be administered in accordance with the League's By-Laws, Operational Procedures and be subject to the supervision of a League Board/Executive which is elected by the Member Clubs of that League), or
- c) Each Regional League will have a board which is composed solely of one (1) representative of each District in that region. In a League that encompasses fewer than four (4) Districts the board will be composed of two (2) representatives from each District.

3.8 A **District Competitive League** may either be:

- a) Run directly by the District Association under the supervision of a League Board/Executive/League Governing Committee appointed by the District Association, (If run directly by the District Association, the rules of the League shall be as set out in the Operational Procedures of the District Association.)
- b) Run as a separate entity with its own By-Laws and Operational Procedures annually delegated to another League to operate (If run as a separate entity, or if delegated to another League to operate, the League shall be administered in accordance with the League's By-Laws and its Operational Procedures and be subject to the supervision of a League Board/Executive which is elected by the Member Clubs of that League.)

3.9 A League Executive Committee or Committee/Staff delegated shall be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the League. The League Executive Committee shall be elected by the member Clubs of the League.

3.10 A League shall be administered in accordance with the League's By-Laws, Operational Procedures. Any changes to the By-Laws shall be as approved by the member Clubs and ratified by its Governing Organization.

Changes to the Operational Procedures may be made by the League Executive Committee and must be ratified by the member Clubs at the next general meeting of the League.



- 3.11** In the event that any article of the League By-Laws or Operational Procedures conflicts with the Governing Documents of Ontario Soccer or Canada Soccer, the provisions of Ontario Soccer or Canada Soccer Governing Documents shall take precedence.
- 3.12** If delegated by its Governing Organization, a League shall control the discipline of its teams, Players, team staff and Club officials involved in League activities only and appoint Match Officials to officiate games under its jurisdiction.
- 3.13** A Regional or District League shall be open to any team in an adjacent Region or District which does not operate an equivalent level of League play, subject to:
- a) Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee approval at Regional Level,
 - b) Both Districts approval at District League level for both Youth and Senior categories
- 3.14** Each Outdoor Youth District Competitive League must operate entirely within the boundaries of the District Association which has sanctioned the League, unless:
- a) The League includes Teams from other Districts, in which case these teams may host their home games in their home District, or;
 - b) Another District Association has approved the League to schedule games within that District.

PROCEDURE 4.0 – Senior Leagues

- 4.1** A Senior Provincial League may operate Regional Divisions based in one (1) or more Regions.
- 4.2** If a District Association permits a Senior District Competitive League or a Senior District Recreational League to be run as a separate entity the League may be formed and operated by its member Clubs.
- a) The League shall annually apply to their District Association(s) for approval to operate;
 - b) The League Executive Committee shall be elected by the representatives of the Member Clubs.

PROCEDURE 5.0 – Local Interlock Leagues

- 5.1** A Local Interlock (Recreational Youth) League shall be formed by its governing Club (s) and may be operated by one (1) or more Club(s).
- 5.2** A Club or Clubs which operate a Local Interlock League shall have a designated Club Head Referee.
- 5.3** Each Indoor and Outdoor Local Interlock League must operate entirely within the boundaries of the District Association which has sanctioned the League, unless:
- a) The League includes Club registered to other Districts, in which case these Clubs may host their home games in their home District, or
 - b) Another District Association has approved the League to schedule games within that District.

PROCEDURE 6.0 – Jurisdiction

- 6.1** Leagues shall be governed as follows:
- a) The following Leagues shall affiliate with **Canada Soccer**:
 - A National League
 - b) The following Leagues shall affiliate with **Ontario Soccer**:
 - Provincial Leagues
 - Regional Leagues



- District Competitive League in which no District Association has more than 51% of the teams in the League or a League in which more than 51% of the teams are from one (1) District Association but that District Association permits Ontario Soccer to govern the League.
- c) The following shall affiliate with a **District Association**:
- District Competitive League shall affiliate with the District Association which has more than 51% of the teams in that League.
 - Grassroots District Development Program shall affiliate with the District Association which has the most teams in that Program.
- d) The following Leagues shall be operated by a Club:
- A Local League (recreational “interlock” only)
 - A Grassroots Local League
- e) Educational or Other Leagues shall:
- affiliate, as an Associate Member, with Ontario Soccer or a District Association
- 6.2** A District Competitive League may be governed by one (1) or more District Associations. If a District Competitive League is governed by a single District Association, its League boundaries may overlap two (2) or more Districts.
- 6.3** If a League operates at more than one (1) League level, it shall affiliate with the Governing Organization of its highest level and be subject to governance and the Published Rules of that Governing Organization.

PROCEDURE 7.0 – Regional Leagues And Boundaries

- 7.1** For the purposes of the Pyramid for Play, the Province of Ontario will be divided into the following Regions:
- a) **West Region** which shall be comprised of the District Associations of Elgin Middlesex, Essex County, Lambton Kent and South-West Regional;
 - b) **South Region** which shall be comprised of the District Associations of Hamilton and District, Niagara, and Peel Halton;
 - c) **Central Region** which shall be comprised of the District Associations of Durham Region, East Central Ontario, TO Soccer, Huronia District, and York Region;
 - d) **East Region** which shall be comprised of the District Associations of Eastern Ontario District, and Southeast Ontario;
 - e) **North Region** which shall be comprised of the District Associations of the Greater North Soccer Association and Soccer Northwest.
- 7.2** Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee is responsible for re-defining boundaries in accordance with the LTPD Soccer For Life principles.

PROCEDURE 8.0 – Formation Of Leagues

- 8.1** A Provincial League or Regional League shall be formed by Ontario Soccer.
- 8.2** A District Competitive League or District Recreational League shall be formed by District Associations.
- 8.3** District Associations wishing to form a new District Competitive League (to be governed by Ontario Soccer) shall apply to Ontario Soccer by no later than:
- a) November 1 (for an outdoor League) or;
 - b) June 1 (for an indoor League)

and after a review of its application by Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee and consultation with the District Associations involved will require the approval of Ontario Soccer’s Chief



Executive Officer.

8.4 A District Association which currently participates in a District Competitive League (governed by Ontario Soccer) and intends to form its own:

- a) District Competitive League (governed by the District Association); or
- b) to become part of another District Competitive League (governed by Ontario Soccer)

must notify Ontario Soccer by November 1 (for an outdoor League) and by June 1 (for an indoor League).

8.5 In a League's first year of operation, the League Executive Committee shall be appointed by the League's Governing Organization.

PROCEDURE 9.0 – Application To Expand/Restructure Leagues Governed By Ontario Soccer

9.1 For the purpose of defining League expansion and/or restructuring, an allowable League expansion or restructuring must be within the same League Status, League Playing Season and League Gender.

9.2 An existing League may apply to expand its number of divisions or restructure its divisions in accordance with the following conditions:

- a) The League shall apply to Ontario Soccer on a form provided by Ontario Soccer and shall submit such application by no later than August 1 of the year preceding the expansion/restructuring (for an outdoor League) or by no later than November 1 preceding the expansion or restructuring (for an indoor League);
- b) Ontario Soccer's Competitions Management Committee shall review all applications;
- c) All District Associations and existing Leagues shall be advised of the application;
- d) Ontario Soccer's Competitions Management Committee shall make a recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer about approval of the application, in principle.
- e) Ontario Soccer's Competitions Management Committee shall give final approval for an existing League to expand or restructure subject to the terms of League operations being approved.

Notwithstanding the timelines above, applications can be submitted, and Ontario Soccer's Competitions Management Committee and the Chief Executive Officer may approve these applications when the specified timelines have not been met.

PROCEDURE 10.0 – Terms Of League Operations For Leagues Governed By Ontario Soccer

10.1 The following Leagues shall have their Terms of League Operations approved annually by Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee:

- a) Provincial Leagues
- b) Regional Leagues
- c) District Competitive League (if governed by Ontario Soccer)

10.2 Each League shall annually sign an agreement within ten (10) days of approval of its Terms of League Operations. In such agreement, the League shall agree to abide by the Operational Procedures of Ontario Soccer, the approved Terms of League Operations, and the decisions made by the Board of Directors; failing which, it will be subject to disciplinary action

10.3 Each League shall comply with its Terms of League Operations which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) have fulfilled the requirements for Associate Membership in Ontario Soccer;



- b) operate in compliance with its By-Laws and Operational Procedures;
 - c) each League shall have its annual budget, including team fees, fines, and all other financial items, approved at a General Meeting of its Member Clubs;
 - d) each League's Published Rules shall not prohibit a person who is affiliated to a Club, League, or other soccer organization from being nominated or elected to a position on its Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an equivalent governing council;
 - e) the League Categories (i.e., Level, Status, Classification, Playing Season, Gender, Age Division(s)) shall be identified;
 - f) the League's geographical location (i.e., Ontario for a Provincial League and the specific Region for Regional Leagues, etc.) shall be identified;
 - g) the names of each of its divisions and the names of the teams to play in each division (Teams in Leagues);
 - h) each League must make available to Ontario Soccer, upon request, an up-to-date list of its teams, team contact persons, team addresses, and team telephone numbers;
 - i) each League's Fiscal Year must end following the end of its playing season or be in accordance with its By-laws;
 - j) the Annual Meeting of an amateur League must be in accordance with its By-laws;
 - k) Ontario Soccer must receive a Notice of each of the League's Member Meetings, be entitled to send (a) representative(s) to such meetings and receive a copy of the Minutes of all of the League's Member Meetings;
 - l) upon the request of Ontario Soccer, a Notice of each League's Board of Directors' meetings shall be provided to Ontario Soccer which will be entitled to send (a) representative(s) to such meetings, and receive a copy of the Minutes of such Meetings;
 - m) Match Official appointments may be delegated to an amateur League by Ontario Soccer and shall be done in accordance with criteria and standards established by Ontario Soccer. If an amateur League fails to comply with such criteria and/or standards, the delegation of Match Official appointments may be rescinded by Ontario Soccer;
 - n) each Outdoor League shall appoint a Referee to all of the games in all of its divisions and Assistant Referees as specified in its Terms of League Operations;
 - o) each Outdoor League shall follow the fee structure as per the Match Officials Fee Protocol and shall not pay more or less than the published game fee. Acknowledgement of compliance must be received by Ontario Soccer by no later than February 1 of each year. The Match Officials Fee Protocol does not apply to Indoor Competition. Each Indoor League shall submit its schedule of Match Official fees to Ontario Soccer by no later than September 1 of each year;
 - p) discipline pertaining to League activities may be delegated to the League and shall be done in accordance with Ontario Soccer Discipline Policy. If the League fails to comply, the delegation of discipline may be rescinded by Ontario Soccer;
 - q) Ontario Soccer shall be entitled to send (an) observer(s) to all discipline hearings and receive a copy of the results of each discipline case;
 - r) the League must submit its Operational Procedures, Membership Criteria and Promotion/Relegation Criteria to Ontario Soccer;
 - s) the League shall recognize and enforce all suspensions levied by Ontario Soccer for misconduct occurring in Ontario Cup games;
 - t) the League may conduct post-season competitions with other Leagues but such competition must be approved by Ontario Soccer;
 - u) a S4L League may operate League Select Teams which may participate in competitions and may travel outside of Ontario, only with the approval of Ontario Soccer; and
 - v) Ontario Soccer may appoint a representative to serve as a Non-Voting Member on the Board of Directors (or its equivalent) of each League.
- 10.4** Ontario Soccer may impose a performance bond, not to exceed \$5,000.00 for each function, on a League regarding the delegation of the "Match Official appointments" function or the "discipline" function; and if the League fails to fulfill its responsibilities regarding the delegated function(s), the Governing Organization may retain the bond in full, or in part, at its discretion.
- 10.5** Failure to abide by any term of the Terms of League Operations, shall render a League subject to disciplinary action by Ontario Soccer including, but not limited to, one (1) or more of the following:



- a) Forfeiture of the League's bond with Ontario Soccer;
- b) A fine levied to the League;
- c) Withdrawal of some of the Terms of League Operations;
- d) The immediate withdrawal of Ontario Soccer approval to operate; and
- e) If d) above is implemented, and upon the request of 50% of the League's membership, Ontario Soccer may reinstate the League under conditions that are mutually acceptable by the League's membership and Ontario Soccer.

10.6 Approval of Terms of League Operations for Leagues Governed by Ontario Soccer

- 10.6.1** Each League shall annually apply to Ontario Soccer for approval to operate during the next playing season as part of the annual Ontario Soccer Membership Renewal process. If the League membership renewal is approved by Ontario Soccer Board, the League will operate under its Terms of League Operations which shall be approved by Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee.
- 10.6.2** Each League shall, by March 15 (for an Outdoor League) and October 1 (for an Indoor League),
- a) Verify the teams with "Full Team Identification" whose Clubs have applied to enter them in the League for the upcoming season; and
 - b) Submit a written summary of all discipline cases for the previous year.
- 10.6.3** Ontario Soccer's Competitions Management Committee shall communicate with each League by February 15 (for Outdoor Leagues) and by October 15 (for Indoor Leagues) to review:
- a) The League's Terms of League Operation;
 - b) The League's past season;
 - c) Any concerns the League may have; and
 - d) Any concerns about the League.
- 10.6.4** The Terms of League Operation, including the teams playing in each of its divisions, for each League shall be considered for approval by Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee by March 31 (for an outdoor League) or by September 15 (for an indoor League).
- 10.6.5** Where a League does not have a published deadline, Teams cannot be added after April 15th as per the above.

PROCEDURE 11.0 – Soccer For Life Leagues' Divisions And Number Of Teams

League Category	Max. No of Divisions (Per Age Group)	Teams per Division (Minimum)	Teams per Division (Maximum)	Comments
Provincial Elite Senior	One (1)	8	12	The League may operate one (1) division at this top level. The League may be permitted, in exceptional circumstances, to operate with fewer than 8 teams.
Provincial Elite Under 21	One (1)	8	12	
Provincial Senior	Two (2)	8	12	The League may operate up to three (3) divisions at this level and are structured horizontally (geographically). The League may be permitted, in exceptional circumstances, to operate with fewer than 8 teams.
Provincial Under 21	Three (3)	8	12	



Regional Senior	Three (3)	6	12	The League may operate up to three (3) divisions at this level and are structured horizontally (geographically). The League may be permitted, in exceptional circumstances, to operate with fewer than 6 teams or more than 12 teams.
Regional Under 21	Three (3)	6	12	
District Competitive Senior	Unlimited	6	12	The League may be permitted, in exceptional circumstances, to operate with fewer than 6 teams or more than 12 teams.
District Recreational Senior	Unlimited	4		Maximum number of teams shall be accordance with the published rules of the League.
Local Senior	Unlimited			Maximum number of teams shall be accordance with the published rules of the League.
Regional Youth League	Two (2)	6	8	Where a League operates two (2) divisions, they must be horizontally structured. A League may be permitted, in exceptional circumstances, to operate with fewer than 6 teams.
District Competitive Youth League	Unlimited	6	12	A League may be permitted, in exceptional circumstances, to operate a division with fewer than 6 teams or more than 12 teams.
Local Youth Interlock League	Unlimited			Maximum and minimum number of teams shall be in accordance with the rules set out by the Clubs.

PROCEDURE 12.0 – Professional Amateur (Pro-Am) Soccer

12.1 Membership

- a) A Pro-Am League may be granted Non-Voting (Associate) Membership upon approved application, and compliance with Ontario Soccer By-Laws, Policies and Procedures.
- b) A Pro-Am League shall annually require Ontario Soccer approval for any out-of-province team to participate in their League and equivalent if a team requests permission to play-out into another out-of-province Pro-Am league.

12.2 Discipline, Appeals, Dispute Resolution

- a) Discipline, Appeals and Dispute Resolutions occurring in Pro-Am Leagues governed by Ontario Soccer shall be handled in accordance with the Leagues' and Ontario Soccer's respective procedures.
- b) A dispute between a registered Player and member Club of a Pro-Am League or between member Clubs of a Pro-Am League shall be dealt with by the League Commissioner or Board of Directors under a published League procedure which shall be approved by Ontario Soccer.

12.3 Competitions

A Pro-Am League, upon proper application to Ontario Soccer, shall be permitted to organize and run a cup competition which is open to other senior Club teams in addition to its own member Club team.



PROCEDURE 13.0 – Interlocking League Divisions

- 13.1** Interlocking shall mean that a League shall schedule games for the teams in any one (1) of its divisions against:
- a) The teams in a division of another League or Leagues; or
 - b) The teams in one (1) or more of its other divisions.
- 13.2** A League may only interlock with a League which has the same League category.
- 13.3** The results of such games shall be included in the League standings of all involved interlocking divisions.
- 13.4** Two (2) or more Leagues interlocking with each other must advise their Governing Organization, in writing, about which division(s) they are interlocking and make their interlocking schedule available prior to the commencement of the playing season.

PROCEDURE 14.0 – Approval Of Teams To Play In An Amateur League Governed By Ontario Soccer

- 14.1** A Club (where eligible) may only apply to a League for which it already has, or has qualified to have, the *Position* for the appropriate division of that League.
- 14.2** A Club (where eligible) shall submit its written application for team entry into the League, on a form provided by the League which includes the provision of "*Full Team Identification*" for each team, to the League by a deadline established by the League.
- 14.3** Each League shall decide on all "Team Entry" applications, 14 days before Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee approves Teams in League. All decisions will be rendered, in writing, within forty-eight (48) hours after the decision is made.
- 14.4** A Club (where eligible) which has been denied "Team Entry" for one (1) of its teams into a division of a League may appeal the League's decision to Ontario Soccer.
- 14.5** Each team which has been approved by the League requires the final approval of Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee.
- 14.6** The Club's District Association and the involved League(s) may submit a "Club Promotion Objection" to Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which team will be considered for approval by the Competitions Management Committee.
- 14.7** When the specified timelines have not been met, Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee may approve the inclusion of an additional team in a League providing that the League has notified Ontario Soccer, at least 14 days prior to the meeting, the name of the additional team and its Club.
- 14.8** A League may impose restrictions on the number of teams permitted to be operated by a Club (where eligible) within a single division operated by that League. This may include specific conditions under which a Club (where eligible) may operate more than one (1) team in a division. All restrictions and conditions must be included in the League's published rules.
- 14.9** A Club (where eligible) shall move up the Pyramid for Play one (1) level at a time, or shall move down, the Pyramid for Play one (1) or more level(s) at a time.
- 14.10** A Club (where eligible) which is promoted into or remains in (from the previous playing season), a Senior/Youth Provincial League, Senior/Youth Regional League or a Senior/Youth District Competitive League shall not be required to obtain "*Playing-Out Permission*" from its District Association. In the case of a Club (where eligible) playing into an adjacent Regional League, the Club shall be subject to the Operational Procedures.



- 14.11** If a Club (where eligible) operates the same team in more than one (1) League, it shall only be eligible to be promoted from the Team in the higher League level or in the higher division of the same League.
- 14.12** A Senior Provincial League, Senior/Youth Regional League or a Senior/Youth District Competitive League may deviate from these "Club Movement" procedures only if approved by Ontario Soccer.
- 14.13** Procedures on promotion and relegation, and team placement, within the Divisions of a League at any given League Level, shall be defined in the League's Operational Procedures and approved annually during approval of the League's Terms of League Operations.
- 14.14** A League must relegate the same number of Clubs as the number of Clubs promoted into it.
- 14.15** If (a) Club(s) declines promotion into a Competitive League, the offer of promotion shall be extended to the next Club(s) provided that the Club(s) was within six (6) points of the last eligible Club to qualify for promotion. Eligibility is based on the original year-end standings.
- 14.16** All Leagues must submit the final League standings to Ontario Soccer within thirty days of the conclusion of the League schedule.

Entry Level into Outdoor Competitive Soccer

- 14.17** Without any pre-qualification, a Club shall have the right to enter a team in a Senior District Competitive League provided that it registers its Players in the competitive Player classification.
- 14.18** The entry level into outdoor competitive soccer shall be at the Senior/Youth District Competitive League level. Under exceptional circumstances, Ontario Soccer may approve an entry level for a Club at the Senior Provincial or Senior/Youth Regional Level levels.

Youth Pyramid

- 14.19** The following Operational Procedures are only applicable to Soccer For Life Competitive Leagues and do not apply to Local Interlock Leagues and District Development Leagues. There shall be no promotion of Under-13 teams into Under-14 age divisions.
- 14.20** An Under-14 or older aged team in an age-specific division of a Youth League must move on to the next highest age division after each playing season.
- 14.21** If an age-specific division includes two-year increments or greater, the team may stay in that age division for a maximum number of years no greater than the number of years included in the increment (i.e., for two-year increments, the team may stay in that age division for a maximum of two (2) years).
- 14.22** A Youth Regional League with eight (8) or less Clubs does not have to relegate any Club(s) to the Youth District Competitive League(s).
- 14.23** At the "*youngest operating age division*" of a Youth Regional League, a minimum of eight (8) teams will be promoted into the Youth Regional League. Promotion is based on District Associations' identification of eligible teams for competition in Regional Leagues. The formula for determining promotion to the Regional Leagues is managed by the Competitions Management Committee of Ontario Soccer.
- 14.24** If there are two (2) or more Youth District Competitive Leagues in the Region, the Competitions Management Committee of Ontario Soccer shall determine the formula used to move teams between the Youth Regional League and the Youth District Competitive Leagues. Promotion is based on District Associations' identification of eligible teams for competition in Regional Leagues.
- 14.25** A relegated Club(s) shall be relegated directly to the Youth District Competitive League(s) in the same Region with which its Club is affiliated.

Club Movement between Two (2) Adjacent Regional Leagues

- 14.26** If a Youth Regional League operates a specific age division during one (1) playing season and in the subsequent year, does not operate that division at the next age and gender classification, the Clubs in that



division, except for a Club relegated out of the Youth Regional Division, will be eligible to play in the Youth Regional Division for that age and gender classification operated in an adjacent Region.

- 14.27** If a League accepts teams from an adjacent Region into its Youth Regional Division in accordance with these Procedures, no Club from its Region, except for a Club relegated out of its Youth Regional Division, will lose its position in that division due to the influx of additional teams from the adjacent Region and the Youth Regional Division shall be permitted to operate with more than the maximum Clubs permitted by the Operational Procedures as long as those teams from the adjacent Region are included in the Division.

Senior Pyramid

- 14.28** A Club may be promoted from a Senior District Competitive League to a Senior Provincial League only if it is a Club in a Region without a Senior Regional League and it has been denied entry into the Senior Regional and Senior District Competitive League(s) in its adjacent Region(s).
- 14.29** A Club shall be relegated from a Senior Provincial League to a Senior District Competitive League only if it is a Club in a Region without a Senior Regional League and it has been denied entry into the Senior Regional League, and in such cases, the Club shall not be required to obtain "Playing-Out Permission" from its District Association.
- 14.30** A League with less than ten (10) Clubs does not have to relegate any Club(s).
- 14.31** A Senior Provincial League, Senior Regional League or a Senior District Competitive League, with ten or more Clubs but less than the maximum number of Clubs permitted by the Published Rules, must relegate at least one (1) Club but it may promote more Clubs into it than it relegates.
- 14.32** (A) relegated Club(s) shall be relegated directly and there shall be no playoff involving promoted Clubs and relegated Clubs.
- 14.33** If a Senior Regional League or a Senior District Competitive League exceeds the maximum number of Clubs permitted by the Published Rules in any of its divisions because additional Clubs are promoted or relegated into it, in accordance with the rules governing Club movement (i.e., promotion and relegation), it shall be permitted to operate with more than the maximum Clubs permitted by the Published Rules but, at the end of the playing season, it must relegate additional Club(s) to the District League(s) in order to reduce the number of Clubs to comply with the maximum number permitted.

Club Movement of Teams

- 14.34** Team Movement from Youth Pyramid to Senior Pyramid
- a) Team Movement into Open Age Divisions of Senior League
- A team moving from the Youth Pyramid into the Open Age Divisions of a Senior League shall move into the bottom division operated by that Senior League.
- b) Team Movement into Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Divisions of a Senior League
- A team may move from the Youth Pyramid into any Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Division operated by a Senior League subject to the following qualifications:
- i. A team moving from a Youth District Recreational League or a Youth Local League is eligible to move into any Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 recreational Division operated by a Senior District League or a Senior Local League, subject to the League's rules.
 - ii. A team moving from a Youth Local League is eligible to move into the bottom Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 District Division or Senior District Division operated by a Senior League.
 - iii. A team finishing in first place or second place in the top Under-18 Division of a Youth Regional League or a Youth District Competitive League is eligible for promotion into the Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Senior Regional Divisions of a Senior League.
 - iv. A team finishing in third place or fourth place in the top Under-18 Division of a Youth Regional League or a Youth District Competitive League is eligible to apply for promotion



into the Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Senior Regional Divisions of a Senior League and acceptance of the application will be entirely at the discretion of the League and subject to approval by the Competitions Management Committee.

- v. A team finishing in fifth place or a lower place in the top Under-18 Division of a Youth Regional League or a Youth District Competitive League is eligible for promotion into the Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Senior Regional Division or Senior District Competitive Division of a Senior League and acceptance of the application will be entirely at the discretion of the League and subject to approval by the Competitions Management Committee.
- vi. A team playing in a lower Under-18 Division of a Youth Regional League or a Youth District Competitive League is eligible to apply for promotion into the Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Senior Regional Division or Senior District Competitive of a Senior League and acceptance of the application will be entirely at the discretion of the League and subject to approval by the Competitions Management Committee.
- vii. A team finishing in first place or second place in the top Under-18 Division of a Youth Regional League is eligible for promotion into the Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Senior Provincial Division of a Senior League.
- viii. A team finishing in first place, second place, third place, fourth place, fifth place, sixth place or seventh place in the Under-18 Division of a Youth Provincial League is eligible for promotion into the Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Senior Provincial Division of a Senior League.
- ix. A team finishing in eighth place or a lower place in the top Under-18 Division, or in any place in a lower Under-18 Division, of a Youth Provincial League is eligible to apply for promotion into the Under-19, Under-20 or Under-21 Senior Regional Division of a Senior League, subject to the League's rules and acceptance of the application will be entirely at the discretion of the League and subject to approval by the Competitions Management Committee.

14.35 Team Movement from Under 19-U21 Division of a Senior League into Open Age Division of a Senior League:

14.35.1 Men's Leagues:

- a) A team moving from the Under-21 Division of a Senior District Recreational League or a Senior Local League shall be eligible to move into any recreational Division operated by a Senior Recreational League or a Senior Local League, subject to the League's rules.
- b) A team moving from the Under-21 Division of a Senior District Competitive League, Senior District Recreational League or Senior Local League, shall be eligible to move into the bottom "District Competitive League" division operated by a Senior League.
- c) A team finishing in first place or second place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Regional League is eligible for promotion into the top "Regional" Open Age Division of a Senior Competitive League.
- d) A team finishing in third place or fourth place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Regional League is eligible to apply for promotion into the top "Regional Level" Open Age Division of a Senior Competitive League.
- e) A team finishing in fifth place or any lower place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Regional League is eligible for promotion into the second "District League Level" Open Age Division of a Senior District Competitive League.
- f) A team finishing in first place or second place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Provincial League is eligible for promotion into the top Senior Regional Open Age Division of a Senior League.
- g) A team finishing in third place or fourth place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Provincial League is eligible to apply for promotion into the top Senior Regional Open Age Division of a Senior League.



- h) A team finishing in fifth place or any lower place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Provincial League is eligible for promotion into the top "Senior District Competitive League Level" Open Age Division of a Senior League.

14.35.2 Women's Leagues:

- a) A team moving from the Under-21 Division of a Senior District Recreational League or Senior Local League shall be eligible to move into any recreational Division operated by a Senior District Recreational League or a Senior Local League, subject to the League's rules.
- b) A team moving from the Under-21 Division of a Senior District Competitive League, Senior District Recreational League or Senior Local League shall be eligible to move into the bottom Senior District Competitive League division operated by a Senior League.
- c) A team finishing in first place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior District Competitive League is eligible for promotion into the top Senior Regional League Open Age Division of a Senior League.
- d) A team finishing in second place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior District Competitive League is eligible to apply for promotion into the top Senior Regional League Open Age Division of a Senior League.
- e) A team finishing in first place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Regional League is eligible for promotion to the top Senior Regional Open Age Division of a Senior League and is also eligible to apply for promotion into the Senior Provincial League Open Age Division of a Senior League.
- f) A team finishing in second place, third place or fourth place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Regional League is eligible for promotion to the top Senior Regional League Open Age Division of a Senior League. Acceptance of the application will be entirely at the discretion of the League and subject to approval by the Competitions Management Committee.
- g) A team finishing in the last two (2) positions in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Regional League is eligible for promotion to the top Senior District Competitive League Open Age Division of a Senior League.
- h) A team finishing in first place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Provincial League is eligible for promotion to the Senior Provincial Open Age Division of a Senior League.
- i) A team finishing in second place, third place or fourth place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Provincial League is eligible for promotion to the top Senior Regional League Open Age Division of a Senior League and is also eligible to apply for promotion into the Senior Provincial League Open Age Division of a Senior League.
- j) A team finishing in fifth or any lower place in the Under-21 Division of a Senior Provincial League is eligible for promotion to the top Senior Regional League Open Age Division of a Senior League.

14.36 Reserve Teams of Clubs, League One (1) Ontario and the Senior Provincial Division of a Men's Senior League or a Women's Senior Provincial League

Notwithstanding applicable procedures, a Club may operate an Under-21 reserve team for its team in the:

- a) Senior Provincial Division of the Men's Senior Provincial League
- b) Senior Provincial Division of the Women's Senior Provincial League

In the Senior Provincial League Under-21 Division or in a Senior Regional League Under-21 Division without having to qualify for promotion. In such cases, the team will not be eligible for promotion into a Senior "Open Age" Division.



PROCEDURE 15.0 – Playing Out Permission (Club Application To Enter Team In League Outside Its Normal Jurisdiction)

- 15.1** A Club shall apply annually to its Governing Organization(s) to enter a team in a League outside its normal jurisdiction.
- 15.2** In order for a team to play in a Senior Regional League, Youth Regional League, or (if governed by Ontario Soccer) Youth District Competitive League in an adjacent Region, the Club (where eligible) is required to obtain:
- a) "Playing-Out Permission" approved by its District Association
 - b) Permission from Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee

Each District Association shall notify Ontario Soccer which Club(s) it has approved, and which Club(s) it has denied, to play in a League in an adjacent Region, prior to the meeting at which the approval of the team(s) will be considered by Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee.

- 15.3** A Club which has been denied "playing-out permission" for one (1) of its teams, may appeal its District Association decision to Ontario Soccer.
- 15.4** In the case of youth teams or grassroots teams, each annual application shall be treated on its own merits and neither the granting nor the denial of "Playing-Out Rights" in any previous year shall be regarded as setting a precedent in the matter.
- 15.5** **Ontario Soccer's PLAYING OUT CRITERIA**

In cases where "District Playing-Out Permission" is required, permission to "play out" into a League not under the jurisdiction of the District Association will only be granted if:

- a) A written application is submitted on a form provided by the District Association, and which is submitted by a member of the Club's Board of Directors to the District Association; which includes:
 - i. "Full Team Identification" for the team entering the League outside its normal jurisdiction;
 - ii. Proof that the League is affiliated to a Governing Organization;
 - iii. A copy of the League's Constitution if a copy of the current constitution is not on file with the Governing Organization considering the application;
 - iv. A copy of the League's Executive Committee, complete with names, position titles, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers; and
 - v. A copy of the written approval for the applying team to participate provided by the League's Governing Organization, plus, for new applications, written acknowledgement from the League that participation by the team cannot begin until Ontario Soccer criteria for permission to "Play-Out" have been met.
 - b) The Club's team has demonstrated based on performance that it is competitive at a level of play above that available within the District and commensurate with that in the League in which the Club wishes to enter its teams;
 - c) Play is not available at the same level within the District as that in the League in which the Club wishes to enter its team;
 - d) Granting "Playing-Out Permission" will not jeopardize the operation of any existing District League; and/or
 - e) A "District Playing-Out Bond", if required, is submitted to the District Association
- 15.6** A District Association may grant "District Playing-Out Permission" to a Club's team on the basis that special conditions apply which make the team an exception compared to other teams in its District.
- 15.7** In general, a Club's team will not be given "District Playing-Out Permission" unless it has demonstrated that it is a suitable ambassador for the District Association based upon, but not limited to, the following criteria:
- a) The team has a satisfactory discipline record;



- b) The team has consistently met its financial obligations in a timely manner; has a record of honouring its commitments as evidenced by a lack of forfeited games and by the completion of all scheduled games for its Leagues, cup competitions and tournaments in which it has been entered; and
- c) While away, the team has behaved, and not acted in any way which would serve to bring its home District Association into disrepute;
- d) While at home, the team has carried out its duties in an exemplary manner;

15.8 A Club looking to play in a League governed by another Provincial Association must complete the requirements in 15.5 as well as the following:

- a) It must apply to, and obtain permission from, its own Governing Organization to "Play-Out";
- b) After completion of a), it must apply to Ontario Soccer for permission to "Play-Out" of Ontario, and the application must be submitted, on a form provided by Ontario Soccer, by no later than 60 days prior to the Board meeting at which it wishes its application to be considered;
- c) The application must be accompanied by the Club's rationale for why Ontario Soccer Pyramid for Play cannot meet its team's competitive needs;
- d) Ontario Soccer's Competitions Management Committee shall review the application and make a recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer;
- e) The Chief Executive Officer may approve such an application even when the specified timelines have not been met; and
- f) Proof of insurance must be provided by the Club naming Ontario Soccer, District Association and the Ontario Club as additional insured.

15.9 A Club looking to play in a League governed by a foreign association must complete the by no later than November 1 of the previous year, as well as the following:

- a) It must obtain the approval of Canada Soccer in accordance with its published rules;
- b) The Club must advise Ontario Soccer in advance of its intention to apply to join a foreign League; and
- c) A senior men's or senior women's team applying for the first time must meet the criteria defined below.

The criteria to be considered by Ontario Soccer shall be as follows:

- a) The Club shall provide evidence that the team has the operational, financial and discipline performance, and coaching qualifications, sufficient to properly represent Ontario while participating in a foreign League;
- b) The Club shall provide evidence that the team has a competitive record in Ontario Soccer Pyramid for Play which justifies its request to play in a League governed by a foreign association;
- c) Where a Club believes that its specific circumstances (e.g., geography) will prevent it from meeting the criteria above, it may apply directly to Ontario Soccer for consideration

15.10 Where approval is granted by Ontario Soccer and the League is USL, the team shall:

- a) Not be eligible to enter the Ontario Cup;
- b) Not be eligible to enter the National Club Championships;
- c) Be granted an exemption from the four (4) youth team and/or mini-soccer team minimum requirement
- d) Register Players in accordance with applicable Registration Procedures

PROCEDURE 16.0 – Playing In Permission (Out Of Province Team Playing In An Ontario League)

16.1 A League in Ontario wishing to permit a non-Ontario team to play in it, must apply annually for permission, in accordance with the following procedures:



- a) It must apply to, and obtain permission from, its own Governing Organization to allow the non-Ontario team to play within its League;
- b) After completion of a), it must apply to Ontario Soccer by no later than February 1st (for an Outdoor League) and by no later than September 1st (for an Indoor League);
- c) The application form must be accompanied by all of the following items:
 - i. "Team Identification" for the out-of-province team applying to play in League;
 - ii. Proof that the team is operated by a Club affiliated to a Governing Organization; (i.e., Letter from Governing Organization)
 - iii. A copy of the written approval by the Club's Governing Organization which approves the participation of the team in the Ontario League;
 - iv. The Club must provide proof of insurance for its Club, team and Players for games played in the Ontario League.
- d) Ontario Soccer Competitions Management Committee shall review the application and make its recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer by no later than March 1st (for an Outdoor League) and by no later than October 1st (for an Indoor League);
- e) The Chief Executive Officer may approve such an application, at its discretion, even when the specified timelines have not been met.

PROCEDURE 17.0 – Player Movement Agreements

- 17.1** A [Player Movement Form](#) is a document signed by two (2) soccer organizations under which they agree to "play up" Players from the teams of one (1) organization to teams of the other organization in League games and in accordance with the terms listed on the applicable Player Movement Form.
- 17.2** The "Standardized Player Movement Form " is to be provided by Ontario Soccer and it will include the terms of the agreement.
- 17.3** The following Player Movement Form may be approved by Ontario Soccer:
- a) Professional/Pro-Am Team with Amateur Team
 - b) Youth to Senior
 - c) Youth to Youth
 - d) Grassroots
 - e) OPDL Player Movement Form Agreement - Youth Amateur
- 17.4** The "Player Movement Form " must be approved with the following organizations in order to be in effect:
- a) Ontario Soccer;
 - b) The District Association with which the two (2) organizations are affiliated; and
 - c) The League in which the team(s) play(s).
- 17.5** The individual Player will not register or sign an agreement with the organization with which her/his organization has a "Player Movement Agreement".
- 17.6** A "Temporary Eligibility Permit" is not required when such movement occurs.
- 17.7** The Player must obtain "Ontario Soccer Registration Identification" which must be available for presentation at each game in which they are playing. Failure to present the Identification shall render the Player ineligible to play in that game.
- 17.8** The League may impose limitations on such movement provided that the limitations are applied consistently.
- 17.9** A "Player Movement Agreement" between two (2) organizations shall be in effect for one (1) year only and may be renewed on an annual basis.
- 17.10** Either organization may terminate the "Player Movement Agreement" at any time during the year by providing written notice to the other organizations and by submitting a copy of the written notice to:
- a) Ontario Soccer;




- b) The District Association with which the two (2) organizations are affiliated; and
- c) The League in which the team(s) play(s).



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