



U.S. Soccer Federation Decision on Player Registration – December 20, 2024

Following our November communication regarding the path forward for player registration, U.S. Soccer has worked closely with our members and key ecosystem leaders to finalize details about the ultimate recommendation. Thank you to the entire landscape for your commitment to this important topic and feedback that led to the final decision.

Details of this decision are below. In speaking with our members, we feel confident that they will work together to make this a smooth process.

Final Decision

- U.S. Soccer’s new policy **allows member organizations to be the decision-maker on the registration choices for leagues and competitions that they sanction and/or run.**
- **For the Fall 2025-2026 season, there should be no change to current registration choices.**
- **For the Fall 2026-2027 season, member organizations will be responsible for approving the registration choice for their leagues and competitions.** The primary registration choices are: (1) Birth Year – January 1-December 31, (2) Seasonal Year – August 1-July 31, or (3) Seasonal Year – September 1-August 31.

The ‘Why’ Behind the Final Decision

As outlined in our previous [statement](#), we recognize how important this decision is and ran a thorough process to capture feedback about the best path forward. Below outlines the key insights that emerged from our assessment of over 15,000 ecosystem stakeholder responses to support this decision.

- **Localized Decision-Making** | Player registration should reflect the unique characteristics of local participants (e.g., school year timing)
- **Segment-Based Considerations** | Acknowledgement that registration choice may need to differ across the recreation, competitive, and pre-professional segments
- **Primary Registration Choices** | Three registration choices emerged as the best options to cover participants across the country; more than three may become confusing, but a different option could be appropriate at the recreation level
- **Scouting Clarity** | Regardless of the registration choice, players will need to be scouted based on their birth year
- **Member Visibility Over Leagues & Participants** | Member organizations, with the visibility of their entire sanctioned league population, can ensure leagues are appropriately aligned via the annual affiliation / sanctioning process



- **Alignment of Post-Season Play & Standalone Competitions** | It is generally seen that for regular seasons serving as qualifiers for post-season competitions, those seasons should be on the same registration choice as the end-state competition (e.g., national championships); for standalone competitions not part of league play (e.g., showcases), member organizations will be responsible for working with the competition organizers on clearly communicating the approved registration choice

Immediate Steps - Next 60 Days

We are working quickly with our members to develop communications and best practices that will support this decision, with the goal of centralizing resources on a U.S. Soccer webpage by our Annual General Meeting on February 27, 2025. You can expect the following resources to be available around that time:

- **Parent/Guardian-, Team-, Club-Specific Communications** – outline considerations for players, team formation, and club needs
- **Collaboration with Leagues** – best practices for how member organizations and leagues can work together on any new annual protocols related to registration choice and associated team formation needs
- **Scenario-Based Resources** – support member organizations, leagues, clubs, teams, and parents / guardians as they navigate unique player scenarios

Until then, please know it is a top priority for U.S. Soccer to support our members and ecosystem stakeholders through this transition, and we anticipate members will begin working with leagues and participants immediately on their path forward.

You can continue to reach out to memberprograms@ussoccer.org with questions or feedback. While change can be difficult, we deeply appreciate our ecosystem's collective help in making this a smooth transition.