



BC Soccer Premier League Rules & Regulations 2023

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1. Introduction

a. Document Purpose

This document provides information on the guiding principles of the league as well as the overview and purpose of the league. Furthermore, it provides detailed information on the BCSPL Rules & Regulations, which the BCSPL Club participants need to deliver against to maintain their status within the BCSPL.

b. Guiding Principles

BC Soccer and the BCSPL commits to four key principles related to player identification and development within the Province of British Columbia, which are:

- 1. To promote a Player/Person First Approach.*
- 2. To support the Canada Soccer's, Long-Term Player Development Principles.*
- 3. To provide Clear and Recognized Pathways for players to be identified, developed, and supported within.*
- 4. To support and enhance all technical standards within the BCSPL.*

c. BC Soccer Premier League Overview and Purpose

The BCSPL is a standards-based development environment for female and male players aged U13 to U18 and is positioned as the highest level of youth development community soccer within BC. Its purpose is to bring together identified players from the BC Soccer membership into training and game environments that supports overall development, as well as providing further opportunities for player identification into higher levels of play including, Provincial Programming, University, Professional/National teams programming and progressing into adult community soccer.

The BCSPL is also designed to support the development of coaches and referees, who are required to attain a minimum level of certification to ensure high standards are in place. This is complimented with ongoing technical support through the BCSPL Participating Clubs, BC Soccer and Canada Soccer.

It is important to note that participating Clubs in the BCSPL have received Canada Soccer's National Youth Club Licence (NYCL) which covers administration, governance, infrastructure, and technical criteria. Received this designation from Canada Soccer in addition to gaining BC Soccer Board of Directors' approval allows for BCSPL participation. Further, participating Clubs must also comply with the BCSPL league rules and regulations. By receiving Canada Soccer's NYCL and complying with the BCSPL rules and regulations, this provides assurance that the participating Clubs are adhering to quality standards and are operating at the highest level of youth community soccer within BC and Canada.

2. League Requirements

a. Governance

BC Soccer oversees the operation of the BCSPL in accordance with BC Soccer Rule 21. All competition in the league is governed by BC Soccer.

The BCSPL Rules and Regulations are reviewed and approved annually by the BC Soccer, Soccer Development Department. BCSPL Rules and Regulations are subject to change at the determination of the BC Soccer, Soccer Development Department in consultation with the Canada Soccer, Technical Department. BCSPL Clubs shall have the opportunity to provide feedback on the BCSPL Rules and Regulations to the BC Soccer, Soccer Development Department on an annual basis through an end of season BCSPL feedback survey and club meetings conducted by the BCSPL General Manager.

BCSPL Clubs may submit requests for dispensation to the BCSPL Rules and Regulations to the BCSPL General Manager. A rationale must be provided. Dispensation may or may not be granted at the discretion of the BC Soccer, Soccer Development Department.

b. Participation and Review Process

All participating clubs in the BCSPL are required to comply with all BCSPL Rules and Regulations within this document along with upholding the rules, regulations, and policies of BC Soccer. As well a meeting the on-going requirements of the Canada Soccer National Youth Club license.

* This report will highlight any regular failings in compliance which will be used at the discretion of the BC Soccer Board of Directors per Rule 21.f. (participation in the BCSPL). Furthermore, this compliance report will be provided to Canada Soccer to support their assessment of the BCSPL Clubs against their National Youth Club License criteria.

If a club is removed from the participation within the BCSPL, Canada Soccer has confirmed the club will also have their Canada Soccer National Youth Club License designation removed.

c. Financial

The league fee for 2023 is \$1500 per team per calendar year and for new teams entering the BCSPL in phase 2, the league fee for is \$750 per team (not applicable for 2023). At the end of each calendar season, the league administrative fee for each club will be invoiced by January 31 of the next season.

i) Fines

Fines will be assessed for violations of league rules and not meeting minimum standard requirements. At the end of the season the sum of the total amount of Fines collected will be allocated to the BCSPL Scholarship fund and therefore distributed directly to players. Applicable fines are stated in the appendix.

The CSA prohibits the imposition of fines on youth age players. Teams, team officials and organizations are not exempted from fine and performance bond policies.

ii) Service Payment

All payments made to those providing services as it pertains to the BCSPL clubs' delivery of programming and competition within the BCSPL, such as administrators, coaches, referees must be made in accordance with CRA and BC employment standards requirements.

d. League Structure

i) League Age Groups

In adjustment to the current league structure and to be implemented for 2023 onwards:

- BCSPL to start at the U14 (Intake) age group. Current U13 (Intake) (2010 Birth Year) will be the last age group to play an (Intake) and full U13 season within the BCSPL. Therefore, for September 2023 onwards clubs would not have teams entering the BCSPL in the U13 (Intake). The 2011 Birth Year will commence the U14 (Intake) for September 2024.
- The U18 age group will be phased out of the BCSPL, and their last year of participation will be Phase 1 of 2024 (2006 Birth Year). In 2024 the new exit age group of the BCSPL will be the U17 age group (2007 Birth Year). This means the U17 age group will only play in Phase 1 in 2024 and beyond (like how U18 does currently).

ii) Playing Season

The season runs from February through November (the "Regular Season") and the 'Intake' Season runs from September to November.

iii) League Schedule

The league schedule is the responsibility of the BCSPL General Manager. The official schedule will be posted on the league's website. Clubs must comply with all league rules and regulations regarding cancellation, rescheduling of matches, and compensation to teams affected by cancellations or forfeits. Scheduling changes will not be allowed except under the most unusual circumstances.

Games must not be scheduled prior to 12:00pm for teams traveling to or from the Island, and 1:00pm for teams traveling to or from the Okanagan. When Island travel is required, games must end with enough time for 2 ferry sailings to be made in case one gets cancelled, and for Okanagan travel, games should be planned so that teams can arrive to the lower mainland or Kelowna by 10pm. Games between Lower Mainland teams must not start prior to 9:00am on weekends and can start no later than 7:00pm, unless agreed upon in advance by both clubs. The latest match start times for Okanagan teams on Sundays playing in the Vancouver area would be 3:00pm.

To change a scheduled match, the following process must be followed:

A Match Change Form must be completed by the team requesting the change and accompanied by a written agreement (email) from the opposing club before changes can be made. A new date must be provided, and no changes will be accepted within 20 days of a match, except under special circumstances, i.e., weather, National Championships, and health related issues. Approved match changes with new dates are subject to a fee of \$35.00 to the club initiating the change.

Time changes within 20 days may only be allowed upon approval of the League Manager and both teams.

iv) League Standings

There are league standings for all age groups. The BC SPL General Manager is responsible for tracking and determining the official standings of all teams in the league.

The Match points system is as follows:

- 3 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie
- 0 points for a loss

Breaking ties in the league is accomplished by applying the following criteria:

- Head-to-head record based on total points in league matches.
- Head-to-head goal difference.
- Total wins in league matches.
- Goal difference in league matches (goal average may be used if different number of scheduled matches).
- Goals scored in league matches.
- Rankings based on points earned against top four group finishers. This tiebreaker will not be used if four or fewer teams comprise the group.
- Lottery conducted by the BC SPL General Manager.

Note: If more than two teams involved in a tiebreaker situation have played each other an unequal number of times, these tie breakers will be skipped, and advancement will be based off a points per game (PPG) calculation

v) Match Day Hosting Requirements

All clubs hosting matches will implement 2 minimum requirements as part of their presentation:

- If benches are not covered, tents are to be provided over both team's bench in every match
- For each BC SPL game, the home team will have a designated first aid trained person with an emergency action plan (EAP) on site, this EAP will be provided to the away team at least 30 minutes prior to kickoff.

vi) Provincial Premier Cup

The winner of the BC Soccer Premier Cup in the U15 and U17 Divisions will represent B.C. at the Canadian Club National Championships.

- Premier Cup qualification - Phase 1
 - Process: League standings will determine quarterfinal Provincial Premier Cup playoff matchups (1v8, 2v7, 3v6, 4v5).

**** The Provincial Premier Cup is subject to the Rules and Regulations of the BC Soccer in regard to Provincial Premier Cup and operates under BC Soccer's Competitions Committee.**

vii) Match Length

Age	Game Length	Halftime
Under 13	2 x 35 minutes	10 minutes
Under 14	2 x 40 minutes	10 minutes
Under 15	2 x 40 minutes	10 minutes
Under 16	2 x 40 minutes	10 minutes
Under 17	2 x 45 minutes	10 minutes
Under 18	2 x 45 minutes	10 minutes

viii) Substitutions

- U13 to U18 Age Group - Unlimited with no re-entry within the same half.

Substitutes shall report and submit a substitution slip to the score keeper at midfield. To replace a player with a substitute there must be a stoppage in play and the referee must be informed. The player only enters the field of play after the player being replaced has left the field and after receiving a signal by the referee. The substituted player may leave the field from any boundary line.

ix) Incomplete Games

If a match cannot continue through to full regulation time, the match will only count if one-half of the match was completed. If a match is suspended prior to the expiration of the first half due to inclement weather or extenuating circumstances, it will be rescheduled to some other date/time agreed upon by the competing teams and the BC SPL starting at the same minute that the match was originally suspended and with the same score. Referee fees will have to be paid again for the re-start. The Referee has the final decision on suspending matches due to weather or field conditions.

x) Postponements

In case of postponements, each home team shall communicate any delay of a postponement with the BC SPL General Manager and the opposing club. All efforts must be made to cancel/postpone a match before the visiting team leaves home because of inclement weather or situations considered acts of God.

Any postponed match must be rescheduled within (5) days of the original date of the match. Any non-played matches will result in no points being awarded to either team and the match will be recorded as a non-played match.

xi) Forfeits

Should any team fail to appear for a scheduled league match or not be able to fulfill a scheduled fixture, the related Club shall incur a forfeit fee of \$500*. The team will also incur a deduction of three (3) points (if applicable) in the league standings and a 1-0 win will be given to the opposing team.

*Forfeit fee will be provided to the opposition club to manage any expenses associated to hosting or travelling cost associated with the cancelled fixture.

xii) Cancellation of Referees

In the case that matches need to be cancelled, Referees will have no match fees owing to them if they receive notification of field closures or game cancellations by 8am the day of their scheduled match.

If a referee receives no prior notification of a match cancellation, and upon arrival at the field declares or realizes the match is not playable for any reason, they will receive 50% of their match fees.

e. Team Rosters and Player Eligibility

i) Registration Deadline

All player registrations must be registered with the BC SPL and approved by the League Manager according to the agreed upon administrative timelines. Players added during the season must be added 48 hours prior to the match to be eligible for play.

ii) Official Roster

The team rosters listed entered on the BC SPL website are the official player rosters of the club. Player and team information must be updated and kept current prior to each match.

Players are considered committed to their BC SPL club from January 1 through November 30. Any transfers or player movement to/from a BC SPL club requires Technical Director (TD) contact with the releasing and accepting clubs. All transfers must comply with BCSA rules and regulations.

The minimum number of players assigned to a team must be 14 and maximum of 20.

Each club must have a minimum of 14 players and a maximum of 18 (except 20 are allowed on rosters for U17 & U18) per team dressed in uniform, present, and eligible to participate in each match. These may include permit players. Roster size limitations may only be exceeded with written approval of the BC SPL General Manager.

Rosters for Provincial Championships are set by the Youth Provincial Championships rules.

iii) Roster Submission

All BC SPL clubs will submit their rosters on the following timelines:

Intakes (Doesn't apply in 2023)

- Roster to be submitted August 15 for the fall mini season of play

U13-U18 age group

- Clubs to commit their teams to the BC SPL by December 15 for the following season of play
- Final roster with minimum 14 players per team submitted February 1

iv) Eligible Player

An eligible player is a player who is properly registered with the league and who is not subject to any kind of suspension by the league or any other league which is in effect at the time.

v) Ineligible Player

Players listed on the Official Roster, but not eligible to play due to reasons such as waiting for an international clearance, serving a league suspension, not age-eligible, not on the official match day roster or subject to other applicable sanctions shall be an ineligible player. Any team using players that have not been properly registered or cleared of sanctions by the league will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action as determined by the league and subject to the BC SA Discipline Policy and Procedures.

vi) Illegal Player

Any player that is not listed on the Official Roster, has not been registered and has not received a player ID card and competes in a match is considered an illegal player. Any team using an illegal player shall be subject to a loss of three points in the standings and forfeiture of each match in which the illegal player was used. The related club will be assessed a fine as outlined on the league's website and in effect at the time.

vii) Player ID Cards

All players and coaches must present their ID card to the referee prior to the match. A player is not considered registered with the league until the player receives his/her player card or a letter of authorization from the BC SPL. If a card is lost, it must be reported to the BC SPL General Manager and if a replacement card is not available, written permission is needed by the BC SPL Manager for the player to be eligible to play. Teams not showing ID cards when requested by match officials to do so can still play the

game but may be required to forfeit the match at the League Manager's discretion resulting in a 1-0 default win for the opponent.

viii) Permitting of Players

A registered BCSPL player is eligible to play for a BCSPL team within their club in an older age division. No permit is required. The player must have their player card and be properly added to the match day roster of the older team.

The BCSPL shall grant a BC Soccer registered player from a team outside the league permission to play for a BCSPL team of his/her true age group or older age division, contingent that the player is registered within the same club, or an affiliation and development agreement exists between two different clubs. The BCSPL club picking up a permit player from another club must complete the online permit form, save a copy to share with the releasing club, print a copy to provide to the match official, and add the player in writing to the game day roster.

Permit players will be allowed for league and league cup matches, and at the discretion of the BCSA for the Provincial Premier Cup. Players from outside the league are allowed to "play down" with the BCSPL club to their true age group.

Players under suspension shall not be eligible to play in the BCSPL or another league.

Any player with a permit must also present a valid BCSID card to be eligible to play. In the case of Under 12 players being permitted, and without BCSID cards, only adding those players to the game day roster is required with the above noted affiliation agreement in place, along with the required permit.

Any disciplinary action applied from misconduct reported while playing in a match under permit shall be served during the very next match(s) with the players registered team.

Any team playing a player on a permit that does not conform to the above Rules shall be sanctioned as for playing an ineligible player and may have Permit Privileges withdrawn.

ix) Transfer Deadline

Between January 1 and May 31, intra-league transfers for BCSPL registered players must be agreed on by the technical directors of the two clubs involved. If no such agreement is reached, the matter will be referred to the League Manager for a decision. Between June 1 and November 30, no intra-league (BCSPL to BCSPL) transfers will be allowed, unless approved by BC Soccer.

x) Cast Policy

The CSA Cast Policy will apply. Prior to the Pre-Competition Meeting any player wearing a cast or who intends to wear a brace or medical support is to be presented for inspection. The Match Official will assess the player's eligibility to play in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

xi) Team Officials

There may be no more than 5 Team officials on the bench, who are either a: head coach, assistant coach, manager, goalkeeper coach, trainer, or authorized Club official (e.g., Club Technical Director).

xii) Criminal Record Check Clearances

All Team officials must have completed their CRC requirements, per BC Soccer's Criminal Record Check Policy by February 1st for the following season or their cards are to be removed by the club. Any new BCSPL staff should not receive Staff ID cards until CRC clearance is received by their club.

f. Judicial Matters

All BCSPL judicial matters (complaints, discipline, protests, appeals) follow the Policies of BC Soccer. The BCSPL General Manager may issue automatic suspensions for match play on behalf of a Judicial Body of BC Soccer.

i) Automatic Sanctions and Notification of suspension

The BCSPL General Manager will inform players and/or team officials of automatic sanctions resulting from match play. Clubs will be notified by the BCSPL office on a weekly basis when a player or team official must serve a suspension, this will be via the suspension list circulated each Thursday by 3:00pm. Players and/or team officials who receive automatic sanctions may request a hearing. Such a request shall be submitted to the Judicial Chair of BC Soccer via the BC Soccer office.

ii) Suspensions

A player or coach that was suspended in a match must serve the suspension and must not participate with another team within the club until suspension has been served.

When a player or team official has been suspended for misconduct for a specific number of games and the suspension is not completed within the current season, the suspension will carry over into the following season.

All cumulative disciplinary records and suspensions will carry over and into any end of season league cup finals/playoffs.

iii) Match day suspension guidelines

Players and coaches sent off from the field are not permitted to watch the match from within their team's designated area. Additionally, coaches are not then permitted to communicate with their team, staff, or players during the remainder of the match. The type of communication prohibited would include cellular, electronic/digital, written, or verbal. Players or coaches returning to the field of play during or directly following the match are subject to additional sanctions.

3. Technical Requirements

BCSPL Clubs must deliver against the following technical requirements as it pertains to player, coach, and referee. Requirements cover the delivery of general club programming including the training and competition environments as well as educational and pathway commitments.

a. Player Requirements

i) Player Development Commitment (Youth)

- All BCSPL Clubs must provide BC Soccer with their Phase 1 and Phase 2 (upon request and in the template provided) training and competition plan that meets the following requirements:
 - All teams are provided with a 3:1 training to game ratio.
 - All team session durations are a minimum of 90 minutes.
 - All teams are provided with a minimum of ½ field for 1 of 3 weekly sessions
 - All BCSPL Clubs must demonstrate alignment with the BC Soccer periodized training plan
- All BCSPL Clubs must adhere to the BC Soccer Player Pathway, whereby higher-level programming or competition is prioritized over a player's BCSPL commitment. Environments that apply to this situation include:
 - BC Soccer Provincial Programming
 - (Professional Programming) example Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy & Elite BC REX
 - Canada National Team Youth Programming
- All BCSPL Clubs must adhere to the scheduling of competition with higher-level programming (above the BCSPL) this includes competition scheduling with the Provincial Program and (Professional Club Programming) example Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy & Elite BC REX programming.
- All BCSPL Clubs must complete and submit the BC Soccer Player Profile Database* within the following requirements:
 - All player 'general information' must be completed 1 week minimum to the start of Phase 1 and Phase 2, annually.
 - All player 'observational information' must be completed on request within 4 weeks of the start of the season, annually.

**Live document update as required.*

ii) Player Evaluation and Selection Process

- All BCSPL Clubs must adhere to the player evaluation and selection process as outlined for the age groups below:
 - Intake Age Group - (Not applicable for 2023)
 - U13 to U18 Age Group - As per BC Soccer rule 21 – Rules for the operation of the BC Soccer High Performance Leagues, c) For the purposes of development only, a technical staff member of a BCHPL team shall be permitted to approach the Technical Director responsible for any other teams to request permission to contact players of that team to offer an

opportunity for promotion, such permission shall not be unreasonably withheld. Any other contact shall be deemed as poaching as described in Rule 6.

b. Coach Requirements

i) Coach Certification

- All BCSPCL Club's designated Technical Lead must have completed the BC Soccer Technical Directors Diploma or have registered their intent to enroll on the next available course.
- All BCSPCL Club Team Head Coaches must have on appointment:
 - A Canada Soccer Youth License Certified status or enrolled in the 2023 Youth Licence course or have a minimum Canada Soccer C Licence Certified, B Licence Certified or A Licence Certified status.
- All BCSPCL Club Team Assistant Coaches must have a minimum Canada Soccer 'Soccer for Life' (or higher including a Canada Soccer C Licence Certified, B Licence Certified or A Licence Certified) within 6 months of appointment.

All BCSPCL Club and/or Team Goalkeeper Coaches must have a minimum BC Soccer GK Goalkeeping Diploma or have registered their intent to enroll on the next available course.

- All BCSPCL Club's must complete and submit the BC Soccer Coach Profile Database* within the following requirements:
 - All coach 'general information' must be completed 1 week minimum to the start of Phase 1 and Phase 2, annually.
 - All coach 'observational information' must be completed on request within 4 weeks of the start of the season, annually.

**Live document update as required.*

c. Referee Requirements

- All Referees officiating in the BCSPCL must be registered and active in RefCentre for the current year/registration period.
- BCSPCL Referees should be appropriately dressed in official referee uniform(s) and come prepared with flags, whistles and other means needed to officiate a game.
- Referees may be mentored, developed, and evaluated at BCSPCL games.
- All BCSPCL Club's must complete and submit the BC Soccer Referee Profile Database* within the following requirements:
 - All referee scores and rankings and observations/comments must be completed by 1st, 2023, for Phase 2.

**Live document update as required.*

i) Assignment and payment of Referees

- On an annual basis each BCSPL Club must provide a designated Club Referee Assignor that will assign home game officials on behalf of the BCSPL Club that adheres to the BCSPL Club Referee Assignor Agreement document (internal document).
- BCSPL Club Assignors are recommended to assign Referees through RefCentre (the preferred assigning software used by BC Soccer) using the BC Refereeing Grading protocol.
- BCSPL Clubs are required to manage the Referee payment process using the pay scale listed below.

Age	U13 and U14	U15 and U16	U17 and U18
Referee	\$55	\$60	\$75
Assistant Referee	\$35	\$40	\$50

4. Appendix

a. League Fines

Fine	Fee
Late remittance of annual league fee	\$500.00
Missed Rules & Regulations deadline (<i>including administrative, operational, and technical</i>)	\$500.00
Fine for not fielding a team in each required age group	\$1000.00
Fine for withdrawal of a committed team	\$500.00
Match forfeit fee	\$500.00
Game scheduling change (<i>Applicable to the club instigating a game change request</i>)	\$150.00
Playing a suspended/illegal player	\$150.00