



PRE-ECNL MINIMUM STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

The Elite Clubs National League is the nation's top youth soccer platform, with the country's best youth players, teams, and clubs. To support the quality of the teams and players, the game day standards and expectations for clubs must be similarly high, as the game-day environment is one of the most public reflections of the ECNL presented to players, parents and spectators. The minimum standards and recommendations for hosting Pre-ECNL competition in a best-in-class environment are below.





MINIMUM STANDARDS:

The following are the minimum standards expected for all Pre-ECNL games, and all participating clubs are required to provide a game-day environment compliant with these standards.

PLAYER REGISTRATION: All players on a Pre-ECNL roster must be registered and carded with US Club Soccer through the league's designated sanctioning process in athlete one.

DIGITAL GAME DAY EXPERIENCE: All Pre-ECNL leagues must utilize the league's digital game day experience, including without limitation, the digital game reports and score reporting.

WEBSITE PRESENCE: The Pre-ECNL schedule and standing must appear on the ECNL website only.

BRANDING: Only approved branding, compliant with the ECNL Brand Standards, may be used in the marketing and promoting of the Pre-ECNL

PRE-ECNL LEAGUE STRUCTURE: The "favored" operating model with the ECNL is a club-based model, and Pre-ECNL leagues should provide this structure where desired by participating clubs.

- Any club not able to compete in all age groups, and desiring to enter individual teams, must be approved by the ECNL and/or the licensed operator.
- Where clubs desire to enter multiple teams in an age group, the default expectation should be that each team competes in a different level of competition. Exceptions to this default expectation must be approved by the ECNL and/or the licensed operator based upon the depth of the player pool within the club.

SCHEDULING: Participating teams must prioritize the Pre-ECNL schedule over all other competitions in which they participate.

TOP CLASS PLAYING FIELD: The playing field must be among the best fields in the area, and must allow the ball to run smoothly on the surface. Turf or natural grass is acceptable.





MINIMUM STANDARDS:

COMPETITION FORMAT: The approved Pre-ECNL competition formats are below.

U12 AGE GROUP

- Fall Season: 9v9
- Spring league Season: 9v9 or 11v11
- All Pre-ECNL Cups in the Fall will play 9v9
- All Pre-ECNL Cups in the Spring will play 11v11
- Pre-ECNL Champions Cup will play 11v11

U11

- Fall & Spring Season: 9v9
- All Pre-ECNL Cups will play 9v9
- Pre-ECNL Champions Cup will play 9v9

U10 AND BELOW

- Fall & Spring Season: 7v7

Build out lines are required

- Build out lines should be equidistant between the penalty area line and halfway line
- If a painted line is not possible, cones or flags must be used

All Pre-ECNL Cups will play 7v7

Pre-ECNL Champions Cup will play 7v7



MINIMUM STANDARDS:

GOAL SIZE:

- 7v7 Goals should be no larger than 6.5 feet (height) x 18.5 feet (width)
- 9v9 Goals should be no larger than 7 feet (height) x 21 feet (width)
- 11v11 Goals should be no larger than 8 feet (height) x 24 feet (width)

PLAYER MOVEMENT:

- No restriction on player movement, so long as the player qualifies by age
- Pre-ECNL players can play in two Pre-ECNL competitions per day, or in one Pre-ECNL competition and one ECNL competition per day

SUBSTITUTIONS:

- Unlimited re-entry

GAME DAY ROSTER SIZE:

- 7v7 Rosters should include no more than 14 players
- 9v9 Rosters should include no more than 16 players
- 11v11 Rosters should include no more than 18 players

LEAGUE GAME LENGTHS:

- 7v7 Games: 30 minute halves, 10 minute halftime
- 9v9 Games: 30 minute halves, 10 minute halftime
- 11v11 Games: 35 minute halves, 10 minute halftime

LEAGUE GAME REFEREES:

- Recommended 3 referees for 7v7 and 9v9 games
- Minimum 1 referee for 7v7 and 9v9 games
- Mandated 3 referees for all 11v11 games

HEADING OF THE BALL:

- U10 no heading of the ball
- U11 no heading of the ball
- U12 heading of the ball is allowed





MINIMUM STANDARDS:

CORNER FLAGS AND LINING: The playing field must have 4 corner flags and be appropriately lined per FIFA requirements.

TEAM BENCHES: Team benches must be provided for both teams.

RESTROOMS/ PORT-A-POTTY: Every field complex must have restrooms or port-a-potties available to players and spectators.

REFEREE PROCEDURES: Every club is expected to be diligent in obtaining the best referees in the area for the age group through their local referee assignors. The home club must provide every referee assigning games the document, "ECNL Referee Procedures" and "Pre-ECNL Standards and Expectations," available on the ECNL website. The assignor should be instructed to provide this document to all referees for Pre-ECNL games.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL: The hosting club must provide the visiting club with the following facility information a minimum of five (5) days prior to competition:

- Address of the facility
- Field numbers and any other unique game-day protocol for the facility (surface type, field dimensions, etc)
- Parking restrictions if any
- Bathroom information
- Expected uniform (colors) to be worn

UNIFORM COLORS:

In a one-game weekend (the teams will confirm uniform colors with each other)

- Home Team - light shirt, light socks, any short
- Away Team: dark shirt, dark socks, any shorts

In a two-three game weekend (teams will confirm uniform colors with each other)

- Game Day #1 - Home Team - light shirt light socks, any short
- Away: dark shirt, dark socks, any shorts
- Game Day #2 - Home Team: dark shirt, dark socks, any short
- Away: light shirt, light socks, any shorts





MINIMUM STANDARDS:

SCHEDULING – START TIMES: No game shall be scheduled prior to 9:00 AM without the consent of the visiting club.

SCHEDULING – LATE GAMES: Unless lights are provided, every game must be scheduled to conclude at least 30 minutes before sunset.

FACILITY SCHEDULING: Unless significant factors prevent it, all Pre-ECNL games on the same day should be played at the same facility.

DIGITAL CHECK IN: Both the home and away team should pull up the ECNL App with the Game Day Roster. The referee should check in each player and staff member using the designated person's phone. Post game, half time and full time score is recorded, all yellow and red cards issued should be marked accordingly with any details required (referee can utilize the QR Code).

HOST SITE ASSESSMENT FORM: All visiting clubs will complete a Host Site Assessment Form after away games. These forms should be completed and returned within 48 hours of the last game at the applicable venue.

TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS: The Pre-ECNL is a competition for young and developing players, and the league structure should consider the age of these players as it impacts travel requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following items are recommended to be provided for all ECNL games.

- Branded Tents for each team's bench area.
- Signage promoting the ECNL, the host club, or other sponsors should surround the field.

