

**Via E-mail**

April 11, 2019

**Attention:** BC Soccer Youth District Member Associations, Affiliated Soccer Clubs, BC Soccer Premier League Clubs, BC Soccer Adult Member Leagues, and Associate Member Organizations

Dear All,

**Purpose of Communication**

The purpose of this communication is to provide the soccer community in BC an update from BC Soccer, with regards to the following:

1. Canada Soccer’s Programming
  - a. Canada Soccer’s Club Licensing
  - b. National Youth Club Licence – Under 8 to Under 12 Programming
2. For-Profit and Non-Profit Organizations – Full Membership with BC Soccer
3. Decline in Player Registration

**Canada Soccer’s Programming - Canada Soccer’s Club Licensing**

Since the introduction of Canada Soccer’s Club Licensing Program in July 2018, there has been much discussion within the soccer community in BC, on how these changes will impact organizations, playing environments and competition/league play. Within this programming, there is the potential to obtain four levels:

Level	Criteria / Information	Comments
<b>Standards for Quality Soccer</b>	Basic level that all organizations in BC should be able to achieve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be in good standing with the organization’s respective governing body, their District and/or BC Soccer</li> </ul> To be in good standing with BC Soccer and able to participate in Canada Soccer’s Club Licensing Program, organizations must have the BC Soccer Club Charter (Standard 1).	BC Soccer Club Charter is based on BC Soccer’s Rules and Regulations, which include criteria from higher levels within Canada Soccer’s Club Licensing Program. Therefore, organizations in BC that have achieved Club Charter status have already achieved some of the criteria for the Standards for Quality Soccer and some more advanced criteria above this level.

<p><b>Provincial Level 1 &amp; 2</b></p>	<p>The introduction of these levels is at the discretion of the respective Provincial Soccer Association (BC Soccer).</p>	<p>BC Soccer is currently not working towards introducing these levels at this time. We will continue to review the value proposition and benefit of this programming.</p>
<p><b>National Youth Club Licence</b></p>	<p>This is the highest youth level of Canada Soccer’s Club Licensing Program and is currently open to organizations in the BC Soccer Premier League (BCSPL). These organizations must have obtained BC Soccer Club Charter Standard 1 and deliver against BC Soccer’s BCSPL Club Licence.</p> <p>For more information on the Canada Soccer Club Licensing Program see link below  <a href="https://www.canadasoccer.com/canada-soccer-licensing-program-categories-p161708-preview-1">https://www.canadasoccer.com/canada-soccer-licensing-program-categories-p161708-preview-1</a></p>	<p>Canada Soccer will open applications for National Youth Club Licences outside of the BCSPL in July 2019, with submissions completed by October 2019.</p> <p>Canada Soccer’s development staff have advised BC Soccer that organizations that achieve this level:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Should be able to participate in the highest level of league/program play in the province, which for BC currently is the BCSPL*, and</li> <li>2. Must operate (or partner to operate) programming in the Under 8 to Under 12 age groups in line with the requirements of the National Youth Club Licence.</li> </ol> <p><b>*Notes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BC Soccer has advised Canada Soccer that in order to expand participation in the BCSPL, it must be done responsibly with a gradual new organization induction process. This could potentially take the form of any new organizations commencing with teams solely in the youngest age group and adding one age group per year until a full complement of teams are populated into all age groups.</li> <li>2. In addition to receiving the National Youth Club Licence designation from Canada Soccer, organizations would also require approval from BC Soccer’s board to participate in the BCSPL.</li> </ol>

## **Canada Soccer’s Programming - National Youth Club Licence – Under 8 to Under 12 Programming**

Per the Canada Soccer Club Licensing criteria, National Youth Club Licence holders must offer (or partner offer) programming for Under 8 to Under 12 that meets the guidelines established by Canada Soccer.

### **What does this mean in BC?**

Looking at the current organizations in the BC SPL:

1. Four are cradle-to-grave clubs therefore, have the ability to meet the U8-U12 programming requirements,
2. One is a district-run program, therefore, would have to introduce or partner to introduce U8-U12 programming, and
3. Three are regional style clubs that solely operate U13 to U18 BC SPL teams, therefore, would have to introduce or partner to introduce U8-U12 programming.

Based on the above, there will be organizations that are currently outside the BC SPL that have been ‘partners’ (feeder clubs) to current BC SPL clubs that apply to become a National Youth Club Licence holder. If they are successful in obtaining the licence, there could potentially be an impact on the current clubs within the BC SPL. With the objective of providing all organizations with an equal opportunity to meet the Canada Soccer’s club licensing standards, and in consideration of BC Soccer’s membership structure, regional clubs may need to become a member of a youth district association in order to operate U8-U12 programs and thus participate in all soccer activity within the district/BC Soccer.

### **For-Profit and Non-Profit Organizations under Full Membership**

In alignment with Via Sport, the BC government sporting branch, BC Soccer has been working on increasing inclusion for soccer. The inclusion stance has specifically been stated also as a desire of Canada Soccer development staff, as it relates to the want for all organizations to be included under the umbrella of organized soccer with the same access to benefits. BC Soccer has been working on this for a number of years and more diligently over the last two.

In June 2018, the BC Soccer board established the Associate Membership Advisory Group (a working group under the BC Soccer Membership Committee), with the primary objectives being to:

1. Facilitate the discussion and information gathering process regarding alignment and further inclusion of academies,

2. Recommend a structure for full membership inclusion of academies,
3. Recommend required amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws and/or Rules and Regulations, as needed, to action item two above, for submission to the membership at the appropriate General Meeting of BC Soccer.

There has been much discussion and work done by the above noted Associate Membership Advisory Group, chaired by BC Soccer board member Garry Sangha. The group's discussion looks to be moving towards lessening the requirement for districts to solely accept non-profit organizations as members. The target is for appropriate bylaws and information to be provided to BC Soccer's membership for consideration at the June 8, 2019, Special General Meeting. This discussion and step for BC Soccer is an important one as it relates to Canada Soccer's Club Licensing Program. Being that Canada Soccer is allowing any organization to apply directly to them, it is important to have as much alignment in structure and programming as possible.

We fully understand the large impact that the Canada Soccer Programming will have on the playing environments and overall soccer structure in BC. At BC Soccer, we will continue to do our utmost to facilitate the discussions as best as possible, while supporting our members and affiliated soccer organizations (which at times have conflicting priorities). In parallel, we will also need to balance our obligation to comply with Canada Soccer directives.

There will be more information being shared from the Associate Membership Advisory Group leading into the BC Soccer Special General Meeting scheduled for June 8, 2019.

### **Decline in Player Registration**

Lastly, but equally as important, is the focus on player registration decline. This trend has been occurring nationally over the last ten years, with direct impacts to BC for the last two years. This challenge is a large and very important one for the collective soccer community in BC. BC Soccer over the next few months will be exploring areas in this regard including player recruitment and retention.

It is important to note that this unfortunate trend is not solely a soccer issue but rather a wider sport issue. We, as a collective soccer community, have a shared responsibility to ensure that effective structures and programming are in place. Soccer needs to be available for all ages and all levels, from fun and recreational to development and high performance. Collectively addressing this challenge is no small task and one we all need to prioritize.



For more information on this topic and to read the report, please see our recent article (<https://bcsoccer.net/news/post/retention-deficit-bc-soccer-shares-2018-retention-survey-summary>).

Thank you all for your continued commitment to support the game in BC.

Kind Regards,

Per: BC Soccer Association

Jason Elligott  
Executive Director  
BC Soccer

CC:

BC Soccer board of directors and staff  
Jason de Vos, Director of Development, Canada Soccer Association