2024 and 2025 Operational Procedures – Game Related Changes/Rationale

OP Number	Game Related Change	Rationale
	Section 1. Governing Docu	ments
P. 1.1	Delete and move Definition to Section 6 – Game Types.	Better suited in Section 6.
P. 1.2	Delete and move Definition to Section 6 – Game Types.	Better suited in Section 6.
P. 1.17	Delete and move Definition to Section 6 – Game Types.	Better suited in Section 6.
P. 1. 14 58	Mass Confrontation Brawl shall mean a physical	To align with IFAB terminology.
	confrontation involving three or more participants.	
P. 1.1 7 6	A Youth Club may operate as either a registered not-	The effective date will no longer be relevant as Canada
	for-profit or for-profit entity, but must be incorporated.	Soccer mandated this as of 2023.
	The Club is the Governing Organization whose primary,	
	long-term objective is to provide Players with	Ontario Soccer now needs to work with Districts and
	development and training through the provision of	Clubs to have all licensed.
	necessary training facilities and infrastructure. Youth	
	Clubs shall apply for a level of Canada Soccer Club	
P. 1. 23 88	Licensing as mandated by Canada Soccer. for 2023 Sanctioned Competition shall mean one or more	Provides further clarification.
P. 1. 23 00	games organized by a Host and will include exhibition	Provides further claffication.
	games, tournament games, League games, and cup	
	games.	
P. 1. 40 35	Exhibition Game shall mean a single sanctioned game	Provides further clarification.
	arranged between teams of registered Players, which	
	is neither not a scheduled League game, play-off game,	
	cup game, tournament game or festival game.	
P. 1.56	Delete and move Definition to Section 6 – Game Types.	Better suited in Section 6.
P. 1.6 5 1	Mental Abuse (also referred to as Psychological	To recognize the different types of abuse.
	abuse) is the use of threats, verbal insults, and other	
	more subtle tactics to control a person's way of	
	thinking.	
P. 1.71	Delete and move Definition to Section 6 – Game Types.	Better suited in Section 6.
P. 1.72	Delete and move Definition to Section 6 – Game Types.	Better suited in Section 6.
P. 1. 100 98	For the purpose of registration on gender-based	To follow the direction of our legal counsel (Sport
	amateur teams, a Player may register with the gender	Law).

	team with which the Player identifies. Transgender Player shall mean a player can register and participate in the gender in which they identify, and confirmation sufficient for guaranteeing access shall be satisfied by documentation or evidence that shows the stated gender is sincerely held, and part of a person's core identity.	Please find full detail in Ontario Soccer Policy document.
	Section 2. Administration	
P. 5.2.4	Registered individuals and/or member organizations are designated as Suspended from Soccer Activity when, after the time frame established by their Governing Organization, they have failed to comply with any membership requirements, discipline or misconduct requirements or penalties that have been assessed. The individual or organization designated as such remains a member of its Governing Organization, but is restricted in its soccer activities, including participation in any Ontario Soccer sanctioned competitions (Leagues, exhibition games, tournaments and festivals) or use of registered Match Officials until all issues are resolved.	To clarify the impact of suspension from soccer activities and to include clarification that the use of Match Officials for their soccer activities is also impacted. This is important from a risk management perspective (i.e. Insurance coverage is not in force when organizations or individuals who are suspended participate in sanctioned events).
	Section 3. Organization	ns
P. 2.2	A District Association shall ensure that age and stage appropriate League competition is available to all teams in its District.	To bring into alignment with Long Term Player Development and Grassroots philosophies.
P. 6.11 b)	Amateur Clubs who operate a youth programme will be required to apply for, and receive, a Canada Soccer Club Licence. Various levels of youth licence are available, however all amateur Clubs operating a youth program will be required to hold, as a minimum requirement, the Quality Soccer Club Licence by the start of the outdoor season 2023.	The effective date will no longer be relevant as Canada Soccer mandated this as of 2023. Ontario Soccer now needs to work with Districts and Clubs to have all licensed.
	Section 5. Registration	n

P. 1.7	A person may not be registered as a Team Head Coach for more than two Competitive teams in any one season.	This statement further directs Clubs to be compliant with Section 11 requirements. Stating this in the registration section provides further clarity for Club and District Administrators when entering and validating Competitive Team Head Coaches.
P. 2.7	At a Club's discretion, it may register when registering its recreational Players into Ontario Soccer's digital registration system, it may register Players in their Local League competition without assigning these Players to teams.	To clearly state that Clubs have the option of registering those Players who play in the house League on block without assigning them to teams. If said teams wish to play outside of their local Club League they may need to be more formalized and assigned to rosters to participate in external competitions.
P. 2.12	An amateur Player may register on the following number of outdoor teams: a) A grassroots Player may only be registered at any one time with only one Club; b) A youth Player may have only a maximum of three registrations, with one or more Clubs, only one of which may be a competitive team; and c) A senior Player may register on an unlimited number of teams with one or more Clubs, only one of which may be a competitive team	Clarification that a youth or senior Player may register with multiple Clubs to make up their three (youth) or unlimited (senior) teams, but still limiting to 3 teams total for youth and only 1 competitive team for both youth and senior.
P. 2.13	An amateur Player may register on the following number of indoor teams: a) A grassroots Player may only have one registration, per season, with only one Club; b) A youth Player may register on a maximum of three indoor teams, only one of which may be a competitive team; and c) A senior Player may register on an unlimited number of teams with one or more Clubs.	Clarification that a youth or senior Player may register with multiple Clubs to make up their three (youth) or unlimited (senior) indoor teams, but still limiting to 3 teams total for youth and only 1 competitive team for both youth and senior.
P. 4.3	All District, Regional or Provincial Level teams ("competitive level") of a registered Club with a District Association must be identified on the field of play by	This new Operational Procedure is to standardize Club competitive level teams, to display their official Club colors and logo on their kits. We have received

	its Club name and/or emblem and be displayed by its Clubs common colors. No third party or affiliated soccer organization markings or colors are permitted	complaints from membership of some teams playing in sanctioned games/tournaments wearing uniforms that are NOT that of the Club, leading to confusion and misrepresentation in the marketplace.
P. 5.6	In the team age divisions Over-30 and over, each Player on: a) An outdoor team must exceed the stipulated age before January 1 preceding the current outdoor playing season; and b) An indoor team must exceed the stipulated age before January 1 during the current indoor playing season Notwithstanding 5.6 a) and 5.6 b), a League may choose to permit an exception for a maximum of two (2) Players who are one year younger than the required age.	This would, in a very small way, help increase registration numbers. Every season we seem to have Players want to register for over 30 and 35 Leagues, but they just miss the registration limit.
P. 5.7	In Open Age divisions, teams may contain Players of any age over the age of 13 16.	Many youth Players that aren't ready to play senior soccer, are being pulled into senior soccer by their teams, because their Clubs feel that there is better competition for their teams in senior soccer. The loss of many youth U16 to U18 teams from youth soccer to senior soccer. This leaves the remaining teams in those youth divisions with low numbers and the need to combine age groups. We need to remove the ability for youth teams to easily switch to senior soccer in order to maintain or
P. 5.8	Club shall register its Players on its teams, subject to the following maximum and minimum limits.	reinstate a thriving youth regional and District program. Mandate of Ontario Soccer's Grassroots Standards. Please refer to the Player Classification Table following this chart.
P. 5.12	Each Club team shall have (a) team official(s) appointed by the Club	Redundant as it is included further along in the procedure.

	Each Club Team may have (a) Team Manager(s), Assistant Manager(s), Assistant Coach(es), Goalkeeper Coach(es), and Fitness Coach(es) as (a) Team Official(s).	Create a more comprehensive list of staff to align OR better define the role of Assistant Coach given available stakeholder education and the requirements of the modern game.
	Such Club Team Officials shall be registered with Ontario Soccer and shall be responsible for the team during the game. Only Team Officials with a Team Official Ontario Soccer Registration shall be eligible to participate in a game, to be listed on the team sheet and to be present in the team's bench technical area.	To improve the terminology.
P. 5.13	For the purpose of registration on gender-based amateur teams, a Player may register with the gender	To follow the direction of legal council (Sport Law).
	team with which the Player identifies. and confirmation sufficient for guaranteeing access shall be satisfied by documentation or evidence that shows the stated gender is sincerely held, and part of a person's core identity. Documentation satisfying the herein stated	To be further detailed in an upcoming Ontario Soccer Policy document.
	standard includes, but is not limited to, government issued documentation or documentation prepared by a health care provider, counsellor, or other qualified professional not related to the player. In accordance	
	with Canada Soccer, this procedure shall not apply to Canada Soccer's National Teams programs, but application of this or a similar policy shall be re-	
	evaluated at such time as FIFA addresses the issue. Also, in accordance with Canada Soccer, this procedure shall not apply to Professional Leagues	
P. 6.2	Players and Team Officials are responsible for having their validated Ontario Soccer REGISTRATION IDENTIFICATION at all games (including League, cup, tournament and exhibition games) for presentation at the request of an ID check.	For clarity and correct terminology.

	Failure to present physical Ontario Soccer REGISTRATION IDENTIFICATION, when requested to do so shall render: the Player ineligible to play in that game as per Section 12 Procedure 9.11.2 h) Playing after failing to produce proof of Ontario Soccer registration when requested to do so. a Team Official ineligible to participate in that game, to	
	be listed on the team sheet and to be present in the team's bench-technical area.	
P. 9 8.1	A Player may be de-registered for any of the following reasons: a) The Player's League playing season has ended. b) The Player has been injured	To add an option to de-register for injury.
P. 9 8.2	A Player shall be de-registered by one of the following methods: a) Automatic de-registration of outdoor Player by Ontario Soccer's registration system on December 31 and automatic de-registration of indoor Player by Ontario Soccer's registration system on May 31; b) Their/The Club de-registers the Player in Ontario Soccer's registration system; with the effective date of deregistration being the date of validation by Ontario Soccer's registration system; c) Their/The Club submits a De-Registration Form to its District Association which de-registers the Player in Ontario Soccer's registration system after which the de-registration is effective.	For clarity and correct terminology.
P. 9 8.3	A Player who has been de-registered during the playing season may register as a new Player. i. A Player can only register as a new Player if deemed to be in good standing	Ensuring Players meet all obligations to previous Clubs.

P. 9.4	If the player de-registers and registers with an organization within his/her District Association, the player may not return to his/her original team until after a period of thirty days	Redundant. This is covered in Procedure 12, Player Transfers.
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Team Status	Player Classification and Team Classification	Team playing season	Maximum Limit	Minimum Limit
	Grassroots Player	Outdoor Indoor	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)
	Classification: 3V3 (No Goalkeeper) for Outdoor/Indoor/Futsal U6 Age Group only		Game Day: 6 Players	
	Grassroots Player	Outdoor Indoor	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)
	Classification: 4V4 (No Goalkeeper) for Outdoor/Indoor/Futsal U7 & U8 Age Group only		Game Day: 8 Players	
	Grassroots Player	Outdoor Indoor	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)
Amateur	Classification: 5v5 (With Goalkeeper) for Outdoor/Indoor/Futsal U8 Age Group only		Game Day: 10 Players	
	Grassroots Player	Outdoor Indoor	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)
	Classification: 7v7 (With Goalkeeper) for Outdoor/Indoor/Futsal U9 & U10 Age Group only		Game Day: 12 Players	
	Grassroots Player	Outdoor Indoor	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)	Roster: Player Pool (no limit)
	Classification: 9v9 (With GK) for Outdoor/Indoor/Futsal U11 & U12 Age Group only		Game Day: 16 Players	
	Youth Outdoor Competitive Player/Team Classification:	Outdoor	20 Players	11 Players

	(for U13, U14, U15, U16, U17 & U18 Teams ONLY)			
	Youth Outdoor Recreational Player/Team Classification: (for U13, U14, U15, U16, U17 & U18 Teams ONLY)	Outdoor	25 Players	11 Players
	Youth Indoor (small sided) Player/Team Classification: (for U13, U14, U15, U16, U17 & U18 Teams ONLY)	Indoor	18 Players	7 Players
	Youth Indoor (11v11) Player/Team Classification: (for U13, U14, U15, U16, U17 & U18 Teams ONLY)	Indoor	20 Players	11 Players
	Youth Futsal Player/Team Classification: (for U13, U14, U15, U16, U17 & U18 Teams ONLY)	Indoor	18 Players	5 Players
	Senior Outdoor Competitive Player/Team Classification	Outdoor	25 Players	11 Players
	Senior Outdoor Recreational (11-a-Side) Player/Team Classification	Outdoor	25 Players	11 Players
	Senior Outdoor Recreational (5-a-Side) Player/Team Classification	Outdoor	25 Players	5 Players
	Senior Indoor (small sided) Player/Team Classification	Indoor	25 Players	7 Players
	Senior Indoor (11v11) Player/Team Classification	Indoor	25 Players	11 Players
	Senior Futsal Player/Team Classification	Indoor	25 Players	5 Players
	A Club with one Professional/Pro-Am Senior Outdoor Competitive Team	Outdoor		
	Professional/Pro-Am Senior Indoor	Indoor		
Professional or Pro-Am	Professional/Pro-Am Senior Futsal	Indoor	As per Canada Soccer Rules and Regulations and Ontario Soccer's Terms Of League Operations with Professional/Pro-Am League.	As per Canada Soccer Rules and Regulations and Ontario Soccer's Terms Of League Operations with Professional/Pro-Am League.

	Section 6. Game Types			
P. 4.5 a) 5.5	All provincial Competitions (e.g. the Ontario Futsal Cup) shall be officiated by four Match Officials appointed by Ontario Soccer a Referee, a Second Referee, a Third Referee and a Timekeeper. During provincial competitions player bibs, a suitable chronometer, a public scoreboard, visible signs and documents shall be used as described in the Futsal Laws of the Game. by with a minimum of two (2) Match Officials, one of which is a Referee and the other a Second Referee. A Third Referee and a Timekeeper may be appointed as required. Competitions involving U8 - U11 age groups, assignors should make every effort to appoint 2 Match Officials however, can appoint a single referee if two are not available.	To simplify the Operational Procedure.		
P. 4.5 b)	For all other competitions (e.g., Youth/Adult Competitive or Adult Recreational) a minimum of two (2) match officials shall be appointed for all levels of competition starting from U12 and higher. Competitions involving U8 - U11 age groups, assignors should make every effort to appoint 2 match officials however, can appoint a single referee if two are not available.	Removal of this Operational Procedure.		
P. 4.5 – 4.6	4.5 All provincial competitions (e.g., the Ontario Futsal Cup) shall be officiated by four Match Officials appointed by Ontario Soccer: a Referee, a Second Referee, a Third Referee and a Timekeeper. During provincial competitions player bibs, a suitable chronometer, a public scoreboard, visible signs and documents shall be used as described in the Futsal Laws of the Game.	Limited ability to capture all rules of this sport. In alignment with Strategic Plan to deliver more comprehensive resources to the membership on Futsal.		

	4.6 Walls and board are not permitted in Futsal competitions.	
	All Futsal competitions shall adhere to Futsal Laws of the Game.	
P. 5 6.4.1	If a Player is evaluated and approved to play with an older age group, that Player shall be registered in that age group exclusively. The Club's Technical Director must sign off on the Player movement and there must be rationale as to why there is Player movement. a) A Technical Director signing-off on any Fast Tracking Player Evaluation forms must hold a minimum of either a Canada Soccer Children's Licence or Ontario Soccer Technical Director Diploma.	Provide a minimum standard of training to effectively assess Player movement in alignment with Long Term Player Development philosophies as prescribed by Canada Soccer and Ontario Soccer. As well as remove duplication with previous procedure wording.
P. 5 6.5	An under 12 and younger age Player may play with a squad with which they are not registered under the following conditions: a) They use a Short Term Registration Permit: i. May only be used by Players who are not registered with Ontario Soccer or a Provincial Association affiliated to Canada Soccer ii. Must be used in accordance with Operational Procedure Section 5.0 Registration Procedures 8.0 Short Term Registration Permit. b) Movement of Players may occur between recreational to development programs within the same Club provided the Player abides by the maximum number of competition days per week. c) Grassroots Club Player Movement Agreement With permission of the District Association and Ontario Soccer a Grassroots Club Player Movement Agreement is a document which may be signed by two Clubs under which they agree to allow Players to play for the affiliated Club that offers a suitable program at the specified age group as a result of the	More inclusive gender neutral language. The second part; clarification is important to enforce that Players whom are predominantly recreational Players, when called to play in the development program, do not play in both games that week. This has been a recurring question from Clubs and Districts on how to manage.

P. 78 .3	other affiliated Club not being able to provide an equivalent program. Ontario Soccer may use its discretion to enable athletes participants with a disability to play soccer in an age group other than the groups dictated by their birth date, including "playing down."	To be more inclusive.
	Section 8. Competition	ns
P. 5.9	Minimum Requirements in Tournament Rules Team Eligibility Criteria: a) All teams must be registered with their Provincial, State, or National Association. b) Each team must include with tournament application written proof of team travel permission authorized by its governing Association. c) In North American and International Class Tournaments, all teams from outside Ontario must supply proof of accident/injury/illness medical insurance to the Tournament Host no later than seven days prior to the tournament. d) Teams may only use Players who are registered with them, except as otherwise stipulated. e) All Youth teams regardless of the competition must have a minimum of one registered Team Official on the bench at all times. If a team does not have a registered Team Official on the bench prior to the game or at any time during the game, the game will be abandoned and result awarded to the opposition. Number of Players Dressed In a Game Teams may only dress and play up to a maximum of twenty (20) Players in each game of the tournament.	Addition provides a requirement for a Team Official on the bench, which currently does not exist. It also provides a course of action if a Team Official is not present, so there is consistency and eliminates inconsistent decisions being made. Would think that this aligns with Safe Sport practices. Number of Players dressed in a game - Some Leagues and tournaments are already allowing 20 Players to dress and play in a game. Operational Procedures allow 20 Players on a roster, so there is confusion when only permitted to dress 18. Leagues or tournaments can still put an 18 Player limit, it just cannot exceed 20.
P. 5.14	"In all cases of alleged game official assault, the misconduct report shall be forwarded by the referee to: a) Ontario Soccer	To show the correct process required, and the responsibility for oversight.

	b) Her/his District Association c) The Tournament Host within 72 hours of the conclusion of the game.	
	A Match Official pre-assault report must be filed with the League, District, Tournament Host and Ontario Soccer no more than 24 hours after assault occurred.	
	In all cases of Match Official assault, the Tournament Host shall have the responsibility for overseeing that the referee assault report has been completed	
P. 12.4	Laws of the Game All games shall be small-sided soccer played under Ontario Soccer's Grassroots Small Sided Soccer Rules.	To correct terminology.
P. 21.3	A higher level team shall be defined as a team which meets any of the following criteria: a) Registered in a higher team age classification; b) Registered in a higher Player classification (recreational/development) c) Registered in a higher team classification; (Club team/District team/regional team) d) Playing in a higher League level; or e) Playing in a higher division of the same League For further clarification see Procedure 21.4 below.	To further clarify the definitions for Player classification.
P. 21.5	A Tournament Team, either "competitive" or "recreational", does not fall within the hierarchy of League divisions. Therefore, a player registered to a Tournament Team may only "play up" by team age classification, player classification or team classification. The player may not play up by League level. Therefore, a Player registered to a Tournament Team may not "play up".	Tournament teams do not currently fall into the vertical hierarchy of levels of Player (aka. League Classification). Furthermore, the mechanism can be abused. As found recently, Club 'x' will place Players on a tournament roster and then "call-up" to both District and Regional levels of Player for outcome-related purposes (promotion/relegation). This adjustment will see that Players assigned to tournament rosters are "locked" to that group.

Section 11. Coaches				
P. 1.0	A person may not be registered as a Competitive Team Head Coach per season for more than two outdoor teams at any one time.	This needs to be at the top of the section to ensure it is read and has impact.		
P. 3.3	All Youth teams regardless of the competition must have a minimum of one registered Team Official on the bench at all times. If a team does not have a registered Team Official on the bench prior to the game or at any time during the game, the game will be abandoned and result awarded to the opposition.	Provides a requirement for a Team Official on the bench, which currently does not exist. It also provides a course of action if a Team Official is not present, so there is consistency and eliminates inconsistent decisions being made. Would think that it would line up with Safe Sport practices. Also included this rule in Competitions - Tournament		
		Rules as a Rule Amendment.		
P. 3.4	Each Club Team may have (a) Team Manager(s), Assistant Manager(s), Assistant Coach(es), Goalkeeper Coach(es), and Fitness Coach(es) as (a) Team Official(s).	Align to procedure change in Section 5 - P. 5.12.		
	Section 12. Discipline			
P. 2.0, 2.1 b)	A registrant or third party submits a written complaint and all supporting evidence and documentation that supports the complaint to a governing organization that an offense has been committed. Action shall only be taken if the Complainant willingly agrees to act as a witness.	Action behind the officials back i.e., Player punched in stomach. A registrant or third party submits a written complaint and all supporting evidence and documentation that supports the complaint to a governing organization that an offense has been committed. Action shall only		
	In cases of serious misconduct, disciplinary action may be taken even if the referee and the assistants did not see the event in question and do not submit a report.	be taken if the Complainant willingly agrees to act as a witness.		
P. 9.5.2.1	Abuse including verbal, physical or mental (psychological) of a youth registered participant (Player, Match Official, Coach, Volunteer) will result in a suspension from all soccer activities	Abusive behaviour is on the rise. Supporting Zero Tolerance initiative under approved #No Ref. No Game" campaign.		

P. 9.16 - Table 1: 1.19	Dismissed for "Serious Foul Play" (as defined by the current IFAB Laws of the Game). Otherwise see 1.21.	The description of serious foul play does not match with the actual IFAB Law.
P. 9.16 - Table 1: 1.21	Dismissed or reported for "Violent Conduct" (as defined by the current IFAB Laws of the Game).	Procedure required a clearer definition.
P. 9.16 - Table 1: 1.74	Reported for using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures directed at a discipline or appeal hearing panel member(s) any affected party at a discipline hearing.	Creates consistency around behaviour expectations.
P. 9.16 - Table 2: 2.10	Deliberately leaving the technical area to show dissent towards, or berate, a Match Official or act in a provocative or inflammatory manner.	Remove "remonstrate with" and replace with "berate".
P. 9.16 - Table 3: 3.70	Provide any false contact information on the Player registration form.	To provide further clarity.
P. 9.16 - Table 4: 4.55	Publicly criticized any other Match Official or Soccer Organization; made derogatory statements to the media, including across any digital platforms relating to any game in which he/she they was were involved concerning the performance of the Players or other Match Officials.	Current policy does not cover criticizing another Match Official by electronic means. Expands the scope of the section by including criticizing a referee to other persons through any means.
P. 9.16 - Table 5: 5.53	A Club's team failed to prevent its spectators or Players' parents from disrupting a game or for persisting in "using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures" directed at a Match Official(s) or any other person that caused the Match Official to make a full stoppage of play. 1st Team Offence: \$500, 2nd Team Offence: \$750, 3rd/More Team Offence: \$1,500.00 fine + full team suspension from all soccer related activities for 30 days	The rationale for the change is to clarify the disruption of the game. For example, if the persistent behavior caused the Match Official to stop the game to speak to a Coach of the team. That makes it very clear that the game was disrupted.
P. 9.16 - Table 5: 5.59	Permitted unregistered teams and/or unregistered Players to participate in their sanctioned Club competitions.	Remove "their" for better clarity.

P. 9.16 - Table	Club failed to attend a discipline hearing at which	Increased fines to support zero tolerance for Match
5: 5.61	it is accused of Match Official assault for the	Official abuse, initiative of the "#No Ref. No Game
	actions of its spectators and/or unidentified	campaign."
	Players, Team Official, Administrators on one of	
	the Club's teams.	
	First offense: \$500, Second Offense \$1,000 Third	
	offense \$1,500	
P. 9.16 - Table	Acted in a manner deemed to be detrimental to the	Clarification.
5: 5.67	game. (see restrictions in Section 12 Operational	
	Procedure 9.12)	
P. 9.16 - Table	Did not register all of its Teams, Team Officials and	Re-write to include Team Officials (i.e. Coach).
5: 5.77	Players with Ontario Soccer	
P. 9.16 - Table	Did not register all of its Leagues, Divisions, coaches	Removes duplication of Team Officials in 5.77 (above).
5: 5.78	and Administrators with Ontario Soccer	