



US YOUTH SOCCER

2023-24 GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE OPERATING PROCEDURES

(as of September 2023)

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the US Youth Soccer Rules (14.06 Conference Operating Procedures) these Great Lakes Conference operating procedures shall be an extension of the rules. When rules are referenced or summarized in these operating procedures, they are meant to mirror the rules in every respect. These operating procedures are specific to the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference.

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SECTION 1. GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE – TEAM INFORMATION

1.01 Commitment

Any team looking to participate in the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference must understand the level of commitment it takes to participate in a League that stretches across nine different state associations. All teams understand that this is a multi-state league and that teams may travel hundreds of miles to participate in conference games. Teams understand that they may not play any true “home” games. A limited number of teams are accepted into the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference, so it is important that each team makes the commitment to travel BEFORE applying to the conference.

1.02 Boys and Girls Age Groups of Competition

The 2023-24 US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference will include the following boys and girls age groups:

- 13 and Under (13U) – for players born on January 1, 2011 or later
- 14 and Under (14U) – for players born on January 1, 2010 or later
- 15 and Under (15U) – for players born on January 1, 2009 or later
- 16 and Under (16U) – for players born on January 1, 2008 or later
- 17 and Under (17U) – for players born on January 1, 2007 or later
- 19 and Under (19U) – for players born on January 1, 2005 or later

1.03 Entry Fee

The team entry fee to participate in the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference is **\$725** per team, per season (paid to US Youth Soccer through your GotSport account at the time of application) and is non-refundable if a team is accepted into the conference and later drops out. State associations may have a higher fee to cover additional costs associated with the conference. This fee will be included in your total at the time of application. The team fee does not include referee fees, which will be paid in accordance with the conference operating procedures. Team fees are paid directly to US Youth Soccer through your GotSport account or mailed in by check. Payment details will be listed at the time of application. Your respective state association will be reimbursed by US Youth Soccer for their additional added fees. Teams do not pay entry fees directly to their state association. Teams may also be required to pay additional event fees for conference hosted events, which can be seen later in this document.

1.04 Conference Boundaries

US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference boundaries are for youth teams that are members of US Youth Soccer State Associations of Michigan, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio North, Ohio South, Kentucky, New York West, Pennsylvania West and West Virginia, although teams from outside these areas may also apply to participate. B13U-19U and G13U-14U teams from Michigan and Indiana may choose to play in either the Midwest Conference or the Great Lakes Conference based on their location, but once a conference is chosen, they must remain in that conference for subsequent years or start from the lowest tier. G15U through G19U teams from Michigan will play in the Midwest Conference in the fall due to conflicts with high school teams in the Great Lakes Conference. G15U through G19U from Indiana will play in the Great Lakes Conference in the spring due to conflicts with high school teams in the Midwest Conference. For Minnesota, G13U and G14U are expected to play in the Midwest Conference, while at G15U through G19U are expected to play in the Great Lakes Conference in the spring due to their high school soccer season conflicts in the fall season. Teams from Pennsylvania West, New York West and West Virginia are encouraged to participate in the Great Lakes Conference but may choose to play in one of the US Youth Soccer National Leagues North Atlantic, Mid Atlantic, or South Atlantic EDP Conferences, with written consent from the league manager.

1.05 Seasons of Play

a) 2023 FALL SEASON

Boys and Girls 13U-14U competitions. The 14U competition during the 2023 Fall season will feature Premier I, and Premier II tiers of play with promotion and relegation between the tiers to determine the 2024 Spring season placement of teams into tiers. As the 13U's is the entry age group for the conferences, the state associations at the time of the team application period will rank teams for admission into the conferences. 13U teams will be grouped geographically in the fall season to determine the Premier I and Premier II tiers for the Spring season.

Boys & Girls Developmental Competition. This age group generally features 8th and 9th graders. We will offer development play for the boys and girls 15U age group. Teams interested in this competition which will not involve promotion or relegation but rather creating a competition platform for players born in 2009 that are in 8th grade while their 9th grade teammates are participating in high school soccer.

b) **2024 SPRING SEASON**

Boys and Girls 13U and 14U competitions. The 13U-14U competition during the 2024 season will feature Premier I and Premier II division tiers of play (primarily based on the results of the 2023 Fall season of play) with promotion and relegation between the tiers for the following soccer year.

Boys 15U through 19U competitions. Due to avoiding conflicts with high school soccer, the Great Lakes Conference will offer its 15U through 19U competition during the 2024 Spring season. Boy's competitions in these age groups during the 2024 Spring season will feature Premier I and Premier II tiers of play with promotion and relegation between the Premier I and Premier II tiers for the following soccer year.

Girls 15U through 19U competitions. Due to avoiding conflicts with high school soccer, the Great Lakes Conference will offer its 15U through 19U competition during the 2024 Spring season. Girl's competitions in these age groups during the 2024 Spring season will feature Premier I and Premier II tiers of play with promotion and relegation between the Premier I and Premier II tiers for the following soccer year.

1.06 Application Procedures

- a) The team application period to participate in the 2023 Fall season 13U and 14U (boys and girls) and Developmental 15U (boys and girls) will **open on or around May 22, 2023, and close on June 30, 2023.**
- b) The team application period to participate in the 2024 Spring Season 15U through 19U (Boys and Girls) age groups will **open on or around July 24, 2023, and close on August 25, 2023.**
The team application period to participate in the 2023 Spring Season 13U and 14U (Boys and Girls) age groups will **open on or around July 24, 2023, and close on November 3, 2023.**

Contact your league manager for the web link to register through GotSport. This will also be available on the conference website on the day the application period opens. Following your application, US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference will send your team information to the state association where your team resides, allowing them to review and endorse the application. For clarification the state association endorsement refers to a team being correctly registered and in good standing with their state association.

After the state association endorsement, the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference selection group will review team applications and determine acceptance into the conference. In completing any application into the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference, teams are required to submit accurate information on team accomplishments. Misrepresentation of team accomplishments may result in the team being disqualified from conference participation.

1.07 Selection and Placement

The US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference two-step acceptance process consists of the following - 1. Each team must be correctly registered and in good standing with their respective state association. 2. The US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference selection group shall review and make determination on the final selection of all teams.

Accepted teams shall be notified via a website posting or e-mail regarding their acceptance and placement into the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference. Premier I and Premier II level slots earned under the 2022-23 Great Lakes Conference season will be honored within a team's respective conference in 2023-24.

Teams wishing to be considered for the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference that are or have been participating in leagues sanctioned outside the US Youth Soccer associated member affiliate leagues (leagues sanctioned by other governing bodies) shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for suitable introduction to the conference at the discretion of the selection group and the league manager.

After the team application window is closed for an upcoming season, proposed team name changes must be communicated to the league manager who will update the state association. Acceptance of the any name change will be dependent and based on the team and its associated roster meeting the acceptance criteria, only then will that name change be granted. If that team does not meet the acceptance criteria, then such a team may be removed from the conference.

All decisions are at the discretion of the conference manager, in communication with the league management group.

1.08 Referees

US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference games will use a three-man referee system. Each team is responsible for one-half of the total referee fees per game and payment is to be made in cash prior to each game as follows:

13U and 14U:	\$85 per game per team; a total of \$170 (\$70 to Referee and \$50 to each AR)
15U and 16U:	\$95 per game per team; a total of \$190 (\$80 to Referee and \$55 to each AR)
17U, and 19U:	\$105 per game per team; a total of \$210 (\$90 to Referee and \$60 to each AR)

*If you are hosting a club hosted weekend, or one-off game, a pre-determined payment method may be used. You may request referee fees ahead of time from the incoming team/s. This must be agreed upon ahead of time, in writing, by all incoming teams and cannot be mandated. If a host club does collect payment ahead of time and plans to pay referees electronically, this must also be agreed upon by their conference approved referee assignor, prior to initially contacting the teams.

The teams are responsible for contacting the relevant referee assignor to ensure match officials are present for their games. The team listed as the "Host" on the schedule takes on this responsibility. The full list of approved referee assignors can be on the conference homepage. If any games are rescheduled from a "Club Hosted Weekend" the host club must be notified and the host designation on the schedule online must be updated. If the host club fails in their responsibility to assign referees to their hosted match(es), the match(es) may result in a forfeit, if the opposition is unwilling to reschedule. If the opposition is willing to reschedule, the team not at fault for the unassigned match reserves the right to host the match(es).

1.09 Team Rosters

Teams may utilize thirty players during a season in accordance with league rules and policies. A maximum 22 primary-player team roster with additional use of a club pass roster shall be utilized in all age groups. Club pass players may only come from within a team's club, provided that the player is a US Youth Soccer member. All rosters shall be submitted to the league through the GotSport platform.

1.10 Rules and Information

Rules and additional information on the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference may be found on the Great Lakes Conference website at: <https://www.usysnationalleague.com/great-lakes-conference/>

1.11 Coaching Education Requirement

Coaches of teams within the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference must achieve a level of coaching education in accordance with the conference operating procedures where all coaches within the team bench area during a game must have a minimum of a US Soccer "D" Coaching License or equivalent prior to the 2023-24 season including but not limited to a United Soccer Coaches Advanced National Diploma. If you have coaches on the coaching education pathway, this requirement may be waived only upon a written request to the league manager with documentation showing the coaching education pathway taken by the coach.

1.12 Permission to Travel

Teams are not required to complete permission to travel permits/forms for games played outside of their state association as permission is automatically granted by state association approval of the team for US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference play.

1.13 Competition Format

All competitions in every age group shall be round robin (unless otherwise stated). There will be no end of season playoffs (unless otherwise stated). Based on the number of teams placed into subdivisions, teams may play a minimum of four games and up to a total of nine US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference games during the season. Please be aware of the number of games that teams will be required to play. US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference teams are required to fulfill their commitment by playing out their entire conference schedule of games.

1.14 Advancement to Regionals

The top (1) team (non-state cup champion) from each Premier I age group and gender of the USYS Great Lakes Conference may qualify for 2024 Midwest Regional Championships in the same seasonal year as the USYS Great Lakes Conference. Specific allocations will be designated early in the spring season. To remain qualified for regionals, a team must also play in their state association's State Cup competition. Please note that 13U and 14U regional qualifiers come from the spring season standings, not the fall season. Any team that achieves an automatic qualification slot to regionals

from the conference is expected to honor the commitment to participate in the Midwest Regional Competition. Failure to field a team in such regional competition will result in a \$500 league fine.

1.15 Qualification into 2024-25 National League Conference Playoffs

Teams placed in the top tier of the conference in Premier I will have opportunities to automatically qualify and compete within a national platform through National League Conference Playoffs for the 2024-25 season. All automatic qualifiers come from the National League Conferences based on teams' performances in the 2023-24 season. An application process will then be used to select teams to fill in any open slots. Additional information can be found [HERE](#). For any other questions please contact nationalleague@usyouthsoccer.org.

1.16 National League Showcase Series Requirement

We have removed the former mandate for the national showcases. These national events have now been replaced with Regional Showcase events. In spring 2024, we will host the "Meet in the Middle Showcase" in Indianapolis, IN, May 10-12 (boys/girls 15U through 19U). This showcase event will be showcase format only, these are not league weekends. This is an additional, optional event that will be by application only (additional fees will apply). This will be primarily for National League teams but is open events and teams from outside of the league may apply. This event will be heavily marketed to college coaches. These events are three-day events. Teams will play a game a day, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

1.17 Location of Games - Hosting

There are three (3) categories for hosting US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference games:

US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference Hosting. US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference hosts games at a multiple field location. There will be additional costs to the teams for playing matches at US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference hosted weekend sites, to cover the additional fees required for facility costs and safely staffing these events. The US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference hosted weekends for the 2023 Fall season and the 2024 Spring season will be posted on the Great Lakes Conference Website.

One-Off Hosting. A team hosts a one-off game between itself and another team from within its division. Host bears all costs for hosting or if teams agree at the time of scheduling, the teams may share costs (usually for games played at a neutral location). Split costs must be agreed at the time of scheduling.

Club Hosting. A team hosts several teams over a weekend amongst teams from within its division. Host team bears all costs for hosting or if the teams agree at the time of scheduling, the teams may share costs (usually for games played at a neutral location). Split costs must be agreed at the time of scheduling.

1.18 Must Be Available to Play Weekends

"Must be **available** to play weekends" for 2023 Fall season are September 9-10, September 16-17, & September 23-24.

"Must be **available** to play weekends" in Spring 2024 are April 20-21, April 27-28, May 4-5 & May 10-12. Teams are only excused from USYS Great Lakes Conference play on these weekends due to state cup conflicts. However, it is the responsibility of teams, affected by their inability to play on "Must be **available** to play weekends", to be flexible in being able to schedule USYS Great Lakes Conference games on other weekends during the Fall and Spring season. A team's requirement to be available to play on these USYS Great Lakes Conference weekends ceases once the division schedule is agreed to by the teams. The purpose of the "Must be **available** to play weekends" is to ensure common play dates. USYS Great Lakes Conference allows flexibility in scheduling providing all teams in a division agree to scheduling flexibility.

1.19 League Fines

Any team that is subject to a league fine/s must pay such fine/s immediately upon notification from League officials. You will receive written email notification from the League of such fines. Any team failing to pay fines imposed on their team may result in such team being suspended from the conference for subsequent years. Any club with a team that is suspended shall receive a warning to their club. If repeated team fines are not paid from said club, the warned club may have all teams suspended from the League for subsequent years. All league fines once issued can be paid through your team GotSport account. Additional late fees will be added if fine invoices are not paid by the due date. Due dates will be provided when the fine is invoiced through GotSport.

SECTION 2. GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE – SCHEDULING INFORMATION

2.01 Mandatory Online Scheduling Meetings

July 31 – August 4, 2023, 2023 Fall Mandatory Online Scheduling Meetings

November 6-17, 2023, 2024 Spring Mandatory Online Scheduling Meeting for Premier I, Premier II (15U-19U)

December 11-15, 2023, 2024 Spring Mandatory Online Scheduling Meeting for all Premier I and Premier II (13U &14U)

2.02 Meeting Schedule

One age group will be assigned to a time slot. Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of your assigned time to check in and to receive updated information for the scheduling process. Note, we have found that in the past, team representatives arrive early for these meetings. We understand some team reps may already be in the room from other age groups, but you **MAY NOT** start scheduling until your **actual start time**. If a team representative is not in place by the official start time, other reps in attendance may schedule without that team. If you do not have a representative at this meeting, then it will be considered that your team is available to play on all weekends throughout the Fall Season (excluding state cup weekends). Teams not in attendance **MUST** accept the schedule and teams in attendance are under no requirement to reschedule any of these matches. Any team failing to send a representative to the scheduling meeting may be subject to a \$300 league fine. The representative can be any staff member or volunteer from that club, they do not specifically have to be part of the team, but each team **MUST** have a representative at the scheduling meeting.

The mandatory scheduling meeting is for all teams. Teams will have the opportunity to develop and finalize their schedules, with other teams within their division. If you do not have a representative at this meeting, then it will be considered that your team is available to play on all weekends throughout the Fall Season (excluding state cup weekends). There will be no consideration for unavailability if a representative is not present at the meeting. We expect to come out of this meeting with game schedules completed. It is our expectation that COACHES, or club DOC's attend these scheduling meetings. Team administrators may attend, but it is **NOT** recommended. Many clubs will send 1-3 coaches to schedule all ages for their whole club.

2.03 General Scheduling Information

Conference schedules will be overseen by the league manager, who will have sole discretion in how game schedules are developed. Teams participating in the Great Lakes Conference must be available to play on the published conference dates. By submitting your team application, your team is committing to play on the published dates for the conference.

- a) **Premier I and Premier II.** After the placement of teams into tiers and subdivisions, teams will be provided with this information on the Great Lakes Conference scheduling process, including details of the mandatory scheduling meeting that will be posted on the conference website. The Great Lakes Conference provides the opportunity for teams to schedule all games in a division in accordance with Great Lakes Conference procedures. All teams in a subdivision must agree to the entire schedule. Availability of fields at Great Lakes Conference hosted sites is limited and will be provided to teams on a first completely approved scheduled, first served basis at the mandatory scheduling meeting. At the start of the mandatory scheduling meeting, a Division Scheduling Coordinator (DSC) may be assigned to each division by the group. The DSC will be responsible for completing the master sheet, having all teams sign and handing it to the scheduling staff to make copies to distribute to each team. Time conflicts will occur for those coaches that coaches multiple teams on Great Lakes Conference weekends and the Great Lakes Conference, as well as the other teams within a division. The league is under no obligation to assist these coaches with their conflicts. Once schedules are developed at the meeting, schedule changes are permitted only in accordance with US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference scheduling policy.

2.04 Conference Hosted Weekends

Conference hosted weekend will take place on the following weekends:

Fall Season 2023

September 23-24 Geneva, OH Up to three fields (turf) \$250 per (3rd match extra \$100)

Spring Season 2023

April 13-14 Sandusky, OH Up to eight fields (turf) \$250 per team (3rd match extra \$100) *

Spring National League Regional Showcase (optional, by application)

May 10-12 Meet in the Middle Showcase - Westfield, IN \$850 per team (3 days/3 matches) *

*Denotes a “Stay to Play” weekend. We are required to use the housing companies to use these state-of-the-art facilities on these weekends.

The fee’s associated with these conference hosted event weekends are to cover additional facility fees, staff, medical coverage, and equipment needed to run these events safely and effectively. These fees are in addition to your conference entry fee. All events are optional, but you accept the fee’s if you schedule matches on any of these weekends. These event weekends have been added to enhance the showcase opportunities for the teams in our conference and to enhance their overall experience. ANY team that withdraws from a conference hosted event after the scheduled dates (not times) have been posted MUST still pay the event fee for that specific event.

2.05 Ground Rules and Procedures

Fall season play may begin on August 5, 2023. All games must be scheduled to be played on or before November 5, 2023.

Spring season play (15U – 19U) may begin on November 18, 2023 and (13U – 14U) may begin on January 6, 2024. All games must be scheduled to be played on or before June 2, 2024.

a) Ground Rules

1. The goal is to come out of this process with your Great Lakes Conference schedule. Each game should be assigned a site and a host organization designated for such site (even if played on a neutral site). The Great Lakes Conference is cognizant that teams, primarily with opponents from within their own state association, may opt to play one offs (or self-scheduled games – i.e., teams set their own date, time, and location). There is no limit on the listing of one offs (self-scheduled games). However, the designation of which games are one-offs (self-scheduled games) must be firmed up. Once it is agreed that certain games shall be one offs/self-scheduled games, then those dates must be submitted to the league by August 18, 2023 for the Fall season and December 1 (15U-19U) and December 29 (13U & 14U) for the Spring season. (See scheduling policy for sanctions if games are not confirmed by these dates).
2. **Travel.** All teams understand that this is a regional league and that teams may travel hundreds of miles to participate in Great Lakes Conference games. The determination of game sites is based in part due to home locations of teams within a division and field availability. Teams understand that they may not play any home games.
3. **Coaches.** Teams should understand that due to the nature of scheduling of games for teams from across the region that scheduling games for the benefit of a single coach who coaches multiple teams should not be expected. Time conflicts will occur for those coaches that coach multiple teams on Great Lakes Conference weekends and the Great Lakes Conference, as well as the other teams within a division, are under no obligation to assist these coaches with their conflicts.
4. If scheduling two games in one day, Great Lakes Conference rules stipulate that efforts be made so that a minimum of three hours’ rest occur between games (from the end of the first game to the start of the second).
5. Also, in situations where teams agree to play three games in a weekend, teams understand that their opponents may not play a similar schedule of games for that weekend. Teams should understand that if they agree to play three games in a weekend, that their opponents and other teams participating that weekend may not play an equal number of games and have equal rest between games. For example, in situations where opponents have different amount of rest in the same day between games, (in order) the host team or local team(s) should be the team(s) scheduled with the least amount of rest.
6. Team(s) may agree to play four games in a weekend due to exceptional circumstances as agreed to with the league manager. If there is a conflict where teams are unable to agree to a mutually agreeable date for their game, teams should apply the concept that USYS State Cup Games are the ONLY games that take precedence over availability for Great Lakes Conference games.
7. All games that are to be played between teams from the same club must be played during the first third of each team’s season or the game will be considered a no-contest. No consideration will be made for games that are postponed.
8. The Great Lakes Conference hosted sites are listed on the availability sheets for each division. These are not required events and sites are merely offered to teams as an option in scheduling games. However, we strongly encourage teams to take up these event weekend options.
9. Waivers to league start/end dates may be permitted only if all teams in a division agree in writing to extend the season and with the approval of the league manager, or by special approval by the league manager.
10. There is risk involved in scheduling matches on grass fields. Do not expect hosts to guarantee that games will be played as field and weather conditions may deem fields unplayable and/or closed.
11. Once the schedule is finalized, teams are released from the “Must be **available** to play weekends.

b) Procedures

1. If there is Designated Scheduling Coordinator (DSC) appointed at the scheduling meeting, they collect and confirm the availability of each team during the meeting and deliver to the league manager.
2. DSC to confirm the host site information as provided by teams within the division. Teams should reconfirm that a host team has the number of field's available necessary to play games at the same time and provide for equal rest time in situations where teams agreed to play two games in one day. Teams should also reconfirm the playing surface of each field. Teams should confirm if games are scheduled on grass or turf (synthetic), as well as fields with any floodlights. Hosts are not obligated to secure back up turf fields as delays or postponements due to weather or field conditions cannot be controlled. All teams understand that there is a risk of postponement. Host pays for all costs associated with hosting, unless agreed otherwise at the time of scheduling. In situations where the host team must move games from grass fields to turf fields, the host team is responsible for costs associated with such hosting (except for extreme weather conditions). Visiting teams are under no obligation to pay for costs unless specifically agreed by ALL teams involved at the time of the scheduling meeting.
3. Utilizing the scheduling match-up template provided to the DSC, place sites and dates agreed to by teams next to game matchups. Game times for all games except those to take place at Great Lakes Conference hosted sites and any one-offs should be determined before the schedule is finalized. It is expected that game start times and rest times between games played on the same day shall be equal (unless otherwise noted). If field changes require game time changes and un-equal rest time between games, the hosting team (followed by other local teams) shall be required to accept a schedule with the least rest time between games (unless agreed upon by the other participating teams). If game times are not determined, the host team has the right to schedule matches as they deem appropriate, pending Great Lakes Conference approval.
4. Teams may designate games to be one-offs (self-scheduled) or club hosted - dates of these games to be scheduled by August 18, 2023 for Fall season and December 1, 2023 (15U-19U) / December 29 (13U &14U) for Spring season or the game may be considered a no contest Game. Please reference section 2.06 of the conference operating procedures for more information.
5. In situations where games are scheduled for Great Lakes Conference hosted sites, the Great Lakes Conference shall have the sole authority to determine game times (as multiple divisions will be playing on-site for these weekends). If a group of teams are scheduled to play two games in one day, game times should be designated as AM-for the series of games to be played first in the day; and PM-for the series of games to be played later in the day. This does not necessarily mean that AM games will be played in the morning. Games may start as early as 7:15 am. Game times listed as PM could stretch from anywhere from Noon to 9 pm. These games times will not be posted until around a month before the event weekend. The Great Lakes Conference is not required to fulfill any special time requests for games scheduled at Great Lakes Conference hosted sites.
6. Matches are scheduled on grass fields with limited turf back-ups at Great Lakes Conference hosted sites in Grand Park. There are field costs to the teams for playing matches at Great Lakes Conference hosted weekend sites. With the addition of these new event sites, teams that choose to attend these weekends will be subject to additional fees as detailed above. Fee to be paid to US Youth Soccer. These event weekends have been added to enhance the showcase opportunities for the teams in our conference and to enhance their overall experience. This fee will go towards the additional rental costs, medical coverage, onsite staff, and equipment needed to run these events safely and effectively.
7. The Great Lakes Conference retains the right to move any matches scheduled by two local teams, as defined solely by the Great Lakes Conference, off the Great Lakes Conference hosted sites.
8. At Great Lakes Conference sites, please know that field sizes vary from 105 to 120 yards in length and 60 yards to 75 yards in width. Fields at Great Lakes Conference hosted sites are available on a first finalized, first to secure basis as fields are limited. The Great Lakes Conference is not required to fulfill any special time requests for games at Great Lakes Conference hosted sites.
9. Great Lakes Conference games may be scheduled during other US Youth Soccer sanctioned competitions during Fall Season weekends. Games must be played under Great Lakes Conference rules and are subject to approval by the Great Lakes Conference. Teams and host organization will be held responsible for Great Lakes Conference rules compliance in these situations. Host organization will be responsible for all referee fees and assigning fees. Teams should know that scheduling matches at such events essentially strips Great Lakes Conference teams of all scheduling rights including but not limited to rescheduling. Extra fees may also be charged, and any matches played at external events must be sent to league manager.
10. Once a schedule is submitted to the Great Lakes Conference, the league manager will distribute a note to all teams confirming that the schedule has been received and that teams have agreed to the schedule.
11. After the deadline date, the Great Lakes Conference has the authority to accept a schedule without approval of the schedule by all teams in a division if a team(s) fails to actively participate in the scheduling process or a team(s) fails to comply with availability on must be available to play weekends (as determined solely by the league manager).

2.06 2023 / 2024 Season Scheduling Policy

1. **Schedule.** Once a division schedule is posted on the Great Lakes Conference website following scheduling meeting, it shall be considered official. Changes are permitted at the discretion of the league manager due to transcription errors, inaccurate information provided to the Great Lakes Conference, or other cause determined by the league manager. Other than one-offs (self-schedule games) and club hosted weekends, the dates and sites are final. If game times are posted, they are considered final and confirmed. If game times are not listed and a status of "Please Submit Schedule Update Form" appears, that means the time, complex, and field are still being confirmed. As confirmations occur on game times, a schedule update form should be submitted through the link on the conference website so the online schedule can be updated and confirmed. Great Lakes Conference games must be played under Great Lakes Conference rules.
2. **One-Offs (Self Schedule Games) & Club Hosted Games** – Deadline to schedule is August 18, 2023 for Fall season and December 1, 2023 (15U-19U) / December 29 (13U & 14U) for Spring season. Games listed as "Please Submit Schedule Update Form" for the site, date and time are considered one-offs (self-schedule games). The two teams are to mutually agree upon a date, site and time for the game and communicate the agreed upon date, time, and site for the game to the Great Lakes Conference for posting. The designated host team is to secure referees. The league manager is to be notified in writing of the game date, time and site as agreed to by the teams through submitting the schedule update form. If the game is not finalized by this date the game may be considered a NO CONTEST GAME and the game will be recorded as played but with no score and thus each team earning zero (0) points for the contest. Failure to schedule one-offs and club hosted games by these dates may result in fines assessed against teams. Designated host teams must ALWAYS contact their referee assignor immediately following scheduling of match. If the host club fails in their responsibility to assign referees to their hosted match(es), the match(es) may result in a forfeit, if the opposition is unwilling to reschedule. If the opposition is willing to reschedule, the team not at fault for the unassigned match reserves the right to host the match(es).
3. **No Contests.** Games deemed to be NO CONTEST will be recorded as a game played but with no score and thus each team earning zero (0) points for the contest.
4. **Changing Current Game Site, Date and/or Time.** Teams are permitted to change current game date, time and/or site provided that such change is made more than 14 days prior to a scheduled game and in accordance to the following procedures:
 - (a) The team seeking to make the change contacts its opponent. Opponent must mutually agree on the game change for the change to occur. (NOTE: in a weekend where teams are playing multiple games and teams within a division and are seeking to move a game off the weekend, provided that the game being changed does not improve the competitive status of teams in a weekend with such determination made solely by the League Manager, then the teams may proceed in requesting a game change). When notifying the Great Lakes Conference of any game changes, such communication must also be sent to all teams involved.
 - (b) IF mutually agreed, contact the league manager with the request including the Game ID (from the schedule online), gender, age group division, and revised game date, time and site; and then (c) Great Lakes Conference confirms the change by posting the revised game on its website.
 - (d) Host team contacts conference approved referee assignor with the change(s) at least 14 days prior to original game date. Also, referee assignors are to be advised a minimum 14 days prior to the date of a rescheduled game or they are not required to fulfill the request for referees.If your opponent does not agree to a change then the game is scheduled to be played as posted.
5. **Additional Procedures on Game Changes.** Any game date, time or site change made within 14 days of a scheduled game shall result in a \$100 scheduling fee payable to US Youth Soccer. Full payment of referee fees may also be required for the game on the original game date and time even if game is changed. Any games that are forfeited within 14 days of a scheduled game date and time shall result in the offending team paying
 - (a) the full referee fees for the forfeited game,
 - (b) an additional \$250 forfeiture fee payable to US Youth Soccer and
 - (c) any field fees that may have been incurred by the host as determined by the league manager.

Minor changes to fields and time made within 14 days of the original scheduled game date and time are permitted only as follows: Field change is less than or equal to 10 miles. Time change is less than or equal to 30 minutes. For all game changes, both teams must confirm that they are agreeable to the change and that full details are forwarded to the league manager for approval. Referee assignors MUST be notified by designated host team.

6. Postponed Games (Procedures and Payment of Referee Fees)

- a. Due to closing of field, field conditions or inclement weather (one off)- If games are postponed the day of the game due to inclement weather, the participating teams will reschedule the game as if it were a one-off (self-schedule) game. Teams will have seven days following the date of postponed game to reschedule the contest. Failure to re-schedule within seven days may result in the game considered a NO CONTEST GAME, as described above. The Great Lakes Conference may allow teams past the seven-day deadline to reschedule if circumstances warrant. If referees are present at the scheduled game date, time and site and no notification of referees has occurred then full referee payment is required.
- b. Due to one team attempting to postpone (or change game) without opponent's approval- If a team arbitrarily postpones a game, without the consent of the opposing team, the game will be treated as a forfeit. Please know that teams that forfeits any game will be relegated one tier for the following season. Team forfeiting a game must also comply with payment or referee fees, assigning fee and forfeiture fee.
- c. Due to one team failing to adhere to Great Lakes Conference rules regarding player/coach passes- In the event that a team fails to adhere to the Great Lakes Conference rules in regard to player/passes (i.e. failure to bring player passes to game, or incorrect sponsoring league passes), the team in non-compliance shall forfeit the game. Team forfeiting a game must also comply with payment or referee fees, assigning fee and forfeiture fee.
- d. Due to field conditions or inclement weather (as part of a series of division games during a weekend)- In situations where multiple games are being played at one site within a division, and games are postponed during the first day of competition (i.e. Saturday), the postponed games are to be scheduled to be played the following day (i.e. Sunday) if possible with such determination made solely by the Great Lakes Conference. A team committing to play games at a site with multiple games commits to play for the entire weekend (Saturday/Sunday). Any game changes should receive Great Lakes Conference approval. If the postponements occur on Sunday, then the teams will have 7 days following the date of postponed game to reschedule the contest. Failure to re-schedule shall result in the game considered a NO CONTEST GAME, as described previously in this policy. The Great Lakes Conference may allow teams past the sever-day deadline to reschedule if circumstances warrant.
- e. Due to a Team having to compete in a USYS State Cup game- In situations where a team must postpone a Great Lakes Conference game due to participation in its USYS State Cup competition, that team bears the responsibility of being flexible in rescheduling the Great Lakes Conference game. Such flexibility includes but is not limited to travelling to play the match. If the postponement occurs within 14 days of the Great Lakes Conference scheduled game, then the team forcing the postponement shall be responsible for both team's scheduling fees and any applicable referee fees.

SECTION 3. GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE – TEAM ROSTER & PLAYER GUIDE

3.01 General

All players must be current US Youth Soccer members and have member passes that have been approved by their respective state association. During a season (Fall or Spring) a primary player may only be listed on one team roster. Players listed as primary on a team roster may also be listed as a club pass player on team roster(s) within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club as approved by the team's State Association, in accordance with Conference Rules and Policy. A player that is rostered to a team outside of the Conference but within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club as approved by the team's State Association, may also be listed as a club pass player on team roster(s) within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club. In situations where a player may be listed as a primary or secondary player, such player may only be on a roster for a team within the player's primary club.

3.02 Roster Size

The maximum roster size on a team's primary roster is 22. The minimum roster size on a team's primary roster is nine. (This excludes players listed on the club pass roster - see below). The maximum number of club pass players is three (3) to twenty-one (21) based on the number of players on a team roster. Club pass players must come from within your club. Only players that hold a current US Youth Soccer member pass may be club pass for a team from within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club.

3.03 Transfers

Transfers within the conference are not allowed during the season. Once a player is on a conference roster, such player is frozen on such team's pool of thirty players for the remainder of the conference season.

3.04 Maximum Number of Players Used in the Season by the Team

A team is allowed to list and use no more than thirty players during a season that includes all players listed on the primary team roster during a season plus any club pass players listed.

3.05 Submission of Team Roster

Teams must file a conference roster, which includes its State Association approved primary and club pass players. All teams must submit their official conference team roster of players no later than seven (7) days prior to the team's scheduled first game.

3.06 Additions to Team Roster

Additional players can be added to the conference roster at any time leading up to a game using the roster building walkthrough on the conference website under the Team Information drop-down. We cannot guarantee conference staff assistance with adding any players to conference rosters after 3 PM ET on the Friday prior to any weekend games.

3.07 Player Limitations

A primary rostered player may only play for one team in a conference division in which their primary team is participating. In situations where a club has multiple teams participating in the same conference division, at no time may such primary players appear on both conference division rosters. Under no circumstances may a player be listed on multiple team rosters if such teams are from different clubs.

During the conference season, a player may play for only one (1) conference team per day. During the conference season, a goalkeeper may be listed on up to two (2) conference team match day team lineups per day from the same club, with the written consent by the conference league manager. A goalkeeper may not play on more than one team in the same gender age group of a conference division and is subject to the same standards as club pass players.

3.08 Game Rosters

No more than 18 active players may appear on your team's GotSport match card and play in any one game. Your GotSport match card will list all rostered players (up to 30 players). Any inactive players **MUST be clearly crossed off** on your GotSport match card. Player name write ins on the match card are NOT permitted under any circumstances.

3.09 Team Rosters – General Overview

- a) The maximum primary team roster size is 22. The minimum primary team roster size is 9.
- b) An initial team roster is to be filed with the conference office no later than seven days prior to a team's first season conference game. Additional players can be added to the conference roster at any time leading up to a game using the roster building walkthrough on the conference website under the Team Information drop-down. We cannot guarantee conference staff assistance with adding any players to conference rosters after 3 PM ET on the Friday prior to any weekend games.
- c) All conference rosters are submitted through GotSport.
- d) While players may be added to a team's conference roster throughout the course of the season, (subject to the 30-player maximum limit), once a player is on a conference roster, such player is frozen on such team's roster for the remainder of the conference season. Teams may not remove players once they are placed/added to a conference roster except if such change is done prior to a team playing its first conference game of the season and with written approval from the League Manager.

3.10 Club Pass Rosters – General Overview

- a) In the conference, only players that hold a current US Youth Soccer member pass from within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club may be a club pass player. In other words, a US Youth Soccer member player may "guest" on a conference team if such player is rostered on a team from within the same affiliated club. The home state association for a team will determine the definition of club pass for this purpose.
- b) At no time may a primary player from another conference team be listed as a club pass player on another team within the same division.
- c) For all age levels the maximum number of club pass player limits will vary based on the number of primary players on the team roster.
- d) Under no circumstances will the conference allow a team to utilize more than 30 total players during a season.
- e) Additional players can be added to the conference roster at any time leading up to a game using the roster building walkthrough on the conference website under the Team Information drop-down. We cannot guarantee Conference staff assistance with adding any players to conference rosters after 3 PM ET on the Friday prior to any weekend games.

- f) Teams may add club pass players to their conference roster throughout the course of a conference season provided that total number of club pass players does not exceed the maximum allowed.
- g) Teams may not remove club pass players once they are placed/added to a conference roster except if such change is done prior to a team playing its first conference game of the season and with written approval from the league manager.
- h) If any player/s on the roster are club pass carded players with the same player number as another player on their team, alternative jerseys should be used. If an alternative is not available, then the number must be edited with washable paint (not tape) and the game card should be edited to match. This is not permissible at the national tier of National League but is permissible at the conference level.

SECTION 4. SCORE SUBMISSIONS

4.01 Score Submission

All match scores must be entered by the WINNING team. In the event of a tie, the team listed first on the schedule should be the team that enters the score and paperwork. This **MUST** be done before leaving the facility. Scores must be entered within 48 hours of the game being played. A Post-Game walkthrough can be found on the conference website in the team information section listed under In-season Information that details how to enter scores into GotSport.

SECTION 5. GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE – FINES

5.01 Scheduling Meeting Fines

If a team representative is not in place by the official start time, other reps in attendance may schedule without that team. If you do not have a representative at this meeting, then it will be considered that your team is available to play on all weekends throughout the Season (excluding state cup weekends). Teams not in attendance **MUST** accept the schedule and teams in attendance are under no requirement to reschedule any of these matches. Any team failing to send a representative to the scheduling meetings may be subject to a \$300 league fine. The representative can be any staff member or volunteer from that club, they do not specifically have to be part of the team, but each team **MUST** have a representative at the scheduling meeting.

5.02 Rescheduling Games

All game changes and updates are due at least 14 days prior to the originally scheduled game. Any game date, time or site change made within 14 days of a scheduled game shall result in a \$100 scheduling fee payable to US Youth Soccer. Minor changes to fields and time made within 14 days of the original scheduled game date and time are permitted only as follows: field change is less than or equal to 10 miles Time change is less than or equal to 30 minutes for all Game Changes, both teams must confirm that they are agreeable to the change and that full details are forwarded to the League Manager for approval. Referee assignors **MUST** be notified by designated host team. Additional late fees will be added if fine invoices are not paid by the due date. Due dates will be provided when the fine is invoiced through GotSport.

5.03 Forfeits

Any games that are forfeited within 14 days of a scheduled game date and time may result in the offending team paying the full referee fees for the forfeited game, an additional \$250 forfeiture fee payable to US Youth Soccer and any field fees that may have been incurred by the host as determined by the League Manager. Forfeits for any other reason may result in a \$250 forfeiture fee. Additional late fees will be added if fine invoices are not paid by the due date. Due dates will be provided when the fine is invoiced through GotSport.

5.04 Advancement to Regionals

The top team (non-state cup champion) from each age group and gender competing in Premier I of the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference may qualify for 2023 Midwest Regional Championships in the same seasonal year as the US Youth Soccer Great Lakes Conference. To remain qualified for Regionals, a team must also play in their state association's State Cup competition (unless a waiver is received from the state association, see National League Rules). Please note that 14U Regionals qualifiers come from the spring season standings, not the fall season. Any team that achieves an automatic qualification slot to Regionals from the conference is expected to honor the commitment to participate in the Midwest Regional Competition. Failure to field a team in such Regional Competition will result in a \$500 league fine. Additional late fees will be added if fine invoices are not paid by the due date. Due dates will be provided when the fine is invoiced through GotSport.

5.05 League Fines

Any team that is subject to a league fine/s must pay such fine/s immediately upon notification from League officials. You will receive written email notification from the League of such fines. Any team failing to pay fines imposed on their team may result in such team being suspended from the conference for subsequent years. Any club with a team that is suspended shall receive a warning to their club. If repeated team fines are not paid from said club, the warned club may have all teams suspended from the League for subsequent years. All league fines once issued can be paid through your team GotSport account. Additional late fees will be added if fine invoices are not paid by the due date. Due dates will be provided when the fine is invoiced through GotSport.

SECTION 6. GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE – PROTESTS AND FINAL AUTHORITY

6.01 Protests

Protests must be made in accordance with USYS National League Conference Rules, Section 20. To be valid and eligible for consideration, a protest must be noted on the GotSport Game Card and orally lodged by a team official with the match referee and the opposing coach at the game site before leaving the field of play. All protests must be submitted in writing and filed by the Director of the Club or the Director of Coaching of the Club that the team is a member with the appropriate fee to the Conference League Manager. The protest must be postmarked no later than three (3) business days after match completion in accordance with the Filing Procedures listed in Rule 20.06. The referee is the final authority on the field of play. All decisions of the referees with respect to matters of fact, including judgment matters, are final.

6.02 Final Authority

The League Manager shall have final authority to act in the best interest of the Great Lakes Conference, which may include but not limited to addressing situations not covered in the Great Lakes Conference Operating Procedures.