



COLCHESTER SOCCER CLUB (CSC)

2024 Competitive (Travel) Program Guidelines

Updated 10/9/24

The Colchester Soccer Club would like to thank you for your interest in our Travel Program. The CSC Travel Program will require an increased commitment level from the [CSC Recreational Soccer Program](#) for players, parents and coaches. This will include, but is not limited to, time, expense, volunteering, and expectations for players, parents, and coaches.

The CSC Travel Program is a player-focused program that develops each player to their highest potential by focusing on three areas of their development: Technical skills, Club pride and a Love for the game of soccer. Travel teams will participate in tournaments throughout the season and play more games than the recreational program. Practices are held twice a week for 90 minutes each and games can be on any day with most being Saturday and Sunday.

The coordination, organization, and operation of the travel portion is conducted by the Vice President of Travel with the support of essential CSC personnel as required.

- **Travel Program Support Personnel (includes but is not limited to)**
 - President
 - Vice President of Recreation
 - Registrar
 - Secretary
 - Boys Travel Coach Representative(s)
 - Girls Travel Coach Representative(s)
 - SoccerFest Tournament Director
 - Field Maintenance Coordinator
 - Director of Coaching
 - Equipment Coordinator
 - Member(s)

Travel Coaches – Every travel team shall be supervised by the following volunteers: one (1) head coach and two (2) assistant coaches (3 with approval), all of which are approved by the Vice President of Travel. Travel Coaches are evaluated yearly on the basis of their own good character and ability to work with children in harmony with the operation of CSC. Travel Head and Assistant Coaches are required to obtain Grassroots 7v7 Licenses or equivalent prior to / during the U-9 season, Grassroots 9v9 Licenses or equivalent by the start of the U-11 season, and Grassroots 11v11 Licenses or equivalent by the start of the U-13 season.

Team Managers – Each travel team may have a designated team manager selected by the head coach and approved by the Vice President of Travel. The team manager will distribute communications for the Head Coach and collect any information for uniforms, tournaments, etc. Team managers are not allowed on the sidelines during a game unless they are also an assistant coach or directed to by the head coach in the absence of other assistants.

CSC is governed by CJSA and Southeast Connecticut Junior Soccer Association (SECJSA) - CSC is a member of SECJSA district within Connecticut (please visit www.secjsa.org for additional details on SECJSA). CSC may also play in adjacent districts that have availability at the discretion of and as approved by the CSC President and Vice President of Travel.

- Colchester Travel Teams are considered Competitive teams due to the one or all of the following criteria:
- Team for which the players are selected on the basis of talent or merit.
- Any team for which tryouts are held.
- Any team on which participation is by invitation.

Therefore, ALL CSC Travel Teams U9 and above are required to at least participate in the Competitive 'Classic League' when available as CSC utilizes tryouts to determine travel rosters. The incoming CSC U9 and or younger teams will be assessed yearly by the Vice President of Travel for determining league participation.

League Division:

CSC strongly encourages players to play in age appropriate divisions. Playing up should be reserved for the very best player that may enhance their playing ability at the higher age group. Exceptions require the approval of both the Vice President of Travel and the President. Under NO circumstances may a player participate in play in a younger age division than his or her age permits. The recognized age divisions are as follows:

League Division	Typical Grade in the Fall
U9	3
U10	4
U11	5
U12	6
U13	7
U14/15	8

Note: U14/15 allows players in the 8th grade who are U15 to play in our league. No player in high school at the U15 age group can play even if they are not playing soccer for their high school. A U14 player in high school can play unless they are playing for their high school team.

Number of Teams and Roster Sizes:

- There will typically be one (1) Boys and Girls Gold Travel Team per age group.
- The following team age groups will be considered: U9, U10, U11, U12, U13 and U14/15 for both Boys and Girls depending upon player and coaching availability.
- Roster sizes will be determined based on tryout and registration numbers.
- The Vice President of Travel may modify the team numbers and placements from year to year based upon circumstances unique to an age/gender group.

Can a player play Premier and Travel?

Yes. *However, the player must attend at least one (1) CSC team practice per week.* Any exceptions must be approved by the Vice President of Travel and Team Head Coach.

Can a player play Travel and another sport?

Yes, but if playing any sport other than premier soccer would cause you to miss practices, games and/or tournaments, rec soccer is your only option.

Playing Time

Below are guidelines for playing time. A player's effort in practice, behavior, attitude and sportsmanship will also have an impact on their playing time and will be up to the coach's discretion.

- U9 and U10 teams – Each player will play approximately half of the minutes over the course of a season.
- U11 through U14/15 – Playing time will be at the discretion of the coach. ***The Recreational Program may be a better fit for those that expect equal playing times in a less competitive environment.***

Travel Team Selection

The Travel Teams will be selected based on ability, and a combination of the tryouts, previous coach's evaluation and experience with the player. The tryout process as well as The Director of Coaching, trainers and licensed coaches who have worked with the players will be used to determine the player's abilities. Abilities can change as a player grows and matures both physically and mentally within the game. Due to this, players are not guaranteed roster spots from year to year and both players and parents should understand and be prepared for such. The Vice President of Travel will approve these team selections each year.

Tryouts

All players must try-out for CSC travel soccer every year. If a current travel soccer player does not appear at tryouts he or she will not be placed on a team. Exceptions will only be made due to extraordinary circumstances (i.e. family emergencies or injury) with the permission of the Vice President of Travel and President.

- Tryouts consist of two sessions - players must attend both sessions. If a player cannot attend both sessions, they must notify the **Vice President of Travel** in advance of the tryout. Missing a tryout may affect a player's chance of being placed on a travel team.
- Players may only tryout for one (1) Travel age group team. Players that are not accepted on a team may **not** play for another CSC Travel Team in the same year.
- The Vice President of Travel and the President have discretion to assign a player 'up' to an older age group on an exception basis. (Albeit very rare)

Tryout Registration

Tryouts are May 5, 2024, and May 19, 2024 at the JJIS soccer field. Specific tryout dates and times will be advertised in the local papers, our Facebook Page and can be found on the CSC website colchestersoccer.org.

- Candidates **must** register on the CSC website for the designated date(s).
- Players must indicate if they would like to be considered for Recreational soccer if not accepted to a travel team for CSC scheduling purposes.

Tryout Format

Only Head Coaches, Hired Trainers, and CSC Board members will evaluate players during the tryouts. Assistant coaches may be asked to support the evaluation process at the discretion of the Vice President of Travel, Director of Coaching and Club President. No one else will be allowed on the field during tryouts (Without the Vice President of Travel's approval). All others must remain in the designated waiting area (on the asphalt sections of the school) to minimize disruption to the players and evaluators.

- For the tryouts, we require all players to bring their own ball, be properly equipped, i.e. shin guards covered by socks, soccer cleats and a source of water and **NO** CSC Travel Uniforms.
- Tryouts will include skill stations and small-sided games. Players will be graded at each tryout and an average score of the two days will be used to assess each player within an age group. Players will be selected based upon their average scoring, previous coach's evaluation, evaluation of trainers who have worked with the team, player's availability to participate in team activities and fit within the team.
- Player rankings and scores will **NOT** be shared with parents or the players. Individual feedback can be provided by contacting the Vice President of Travel at vp.travel@colchestersoccer.org

Announcement of Rosters

Rosters will be listed on the CSC website. Players will not receive individual notifications.

- Accepted players will receive an email from their coach within 5 days of the roster posting.
- Players that are not accepted to travel teams will have the opportunity to play Recreational soccer without incurring a late fee if registered within 5 days of roster postings.

Uniforms

Uniforms will be 'refreshed' by CSC every third (3rd) year. This is based upon manufacturer availability and service. The CSC President and Vice President of Travel will assess uniforms and vendors each year. (Generally, players will purchase uniform kits in the following age groups: U8/U9, U11 and U13)

- Players will be required to order and purchase their own uniform kit through the CSC website.
- Pricing will be available on the CSC website.
- The CSC Uniform kit will consist of the following: Home Jersey, away (Conflict) Jersey, Shorts 2 pairs, Socks 2 pairs, Practice Jersey
- Accessories will also be available at a discounted rate prior to the Fall season. The most commonly purchased accessories include:
 - Team Logo Backpack
 - Team Warm-up (Jacket and Pants)
 - Extra Shorts, Socks, Jersey
 - Fall Jackets

ONLY rostered travel players will be able to purchase travel kits and travel accessories. The uniform vendor will maintain a roster list for verification. All players are required to have shin guards, cleats, and an appropriately sized soccer ball (size 3 for U8, size 4 for U9-U12, size 5 for U13 and U14).

CSC Travel Soccer Fees

Please see [Pricing & Registration Instructions](#) page for further information.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance may be requested confidentially through the CSC Treasurer at treasurer@colchestersoccer.org. The Treasurer will work with you to determine eligibility. Assistance is limited to the registration fees only.. Uniforms, equipment, and the town field use fee (\$10.00) are not eligible for financial aid.

Professional Training:

CSC has contracted with Professional Trainers to support our coaches, conduct the CSC summer camp, and aid in player development.

- CSC will have a dedicated Professional Trainer that is available throughout the entire season for practice sessions, practice planning, development planning, games, and a general advisory role.
- Professional Trainers will also conduct clinics focusing on specific skills such as: goalkeeping, striker training, etc.
- Coach and player development will be conducted through practices and game situation observation. Professional Trainers will conduct each practice sessions and also provide lesson planning and feedback to the team's coaches and Vice President of Travel.

Connecticut Cup

The Connecticut Cup is a statewide, single-elimination tournament played on Saturday afternoons over the course of a season for the U11 and older age groups. Games are played throughout the season and may be played in any town in Connecticut.

Tournaments

CSC travel teams participate in at least two away tournaments selected by the travel coaches in coordination with the Vice President of Travel typically the 3rd weekend in September and Columbus Day weekend. At least one tournament may require travel and an overnight stay that is not included in the registration fee.

- Tournaments usually consist of two games on Saturday and two games on Sunday.
- Teams may also participate in the Madison Soccer Tournament around the 3rd weekend in September or any other tournament approved by the Vice President of Travel. Fees are included in the Travel Fees for 2 tournaments.
- All teams will participate in the Colchester SoccerFest Tournament that is held at the end of the Fall season. There is no entry fee for Colchester teams, however, each team will be assigned volunteer time slots to fill during the tournament (volunteering will not conflict with your child's game schedule) for approximately two (2) hours per player registered.

SoccerFest

SoccerFest is a two-day soccer tournament held at the Colchester Recreational Complex and the local Schools that brings in travel teams across the Northeast states. SoccerFest is also Colchester Soccer Club's **main** fundraiser. SoccerFest is usually held the first weekend in November.

Spring Soccer

Although highly encouraged, the CSC Spring soccer season is optional and is based upon player and district team availability. Spring soccer provides players an additional opportunity to continue to develop as players and have some fun outdoors after a long Winter season indoors.

- Spring soccer is optional and will not impact a player's position on the travel team.
- Only returning rostered travel players are allowed to participate in Spring soccer. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Vice President of Travel.
- Travel teams that participate in Spring Soccer may also participate in the optional Spring CT Cup. Spring Cup follows the same guidelines as Fall CT Cup.

Silent Sidelines

Each Fall and Spring playing season, CJSA sponsors a statewide Silent Sidelines weekend. Coaches will be permitted to give players direction from the sidelines. Spectators will be directed to refrain from making any comments to players, coaches, or referees, but will be permitted to applaud efforts by players. The Spring silent sideline weekend is the third weekend in May. The Fall silent sideline weekend is the third weekend in October.

Time Frames / Commitments

1. **Tryouts** – May 5th & 19th 2024
2. **CSC Travel Summer Camp** – August 12 - 16, 2024
3. **Team Practices** - Practices will be held at least twice a week for approximately 90 minutes each session.

Practices will be selected by the Vice President of Travel and Field Coordinator prior to the season based upon field availability and requests. Players that play for Developmental or Premier Leagues are required to regularly attend at least one (1) practice per week (Any exceptions will be made through the Vice President of Travel with guidance from the team's Head Coach). Generally, **U9 – U11** teams will practice from 5:00pm – 6:30pm and **U12 – U14/15** from 6:30pm – 8:00pm (Times and teams are subject to change based upon field availability and other variables)

Games - Officially begin Labor Day weekend and can extend through mid-November. Each team will typically play a minimum of four (4) home and four (4) away games.

Tournaments – A general list of dates can be found below (subject to change):

- 3rd Weekend in September
- Columbus Day Weekend
- Weekend after Columbus Day (optional)
- 1st Weekend of November

Field

- Each team's players, coaches, managers, as listed on the team roster, will take positions on the same side of the field, but will be separated by the halfway line.
- All spectators will take positions on the opposite side of the field and no closer than 2 yards from the touch lines.
- No one is permitted on the field without the referee's permission. Anyone violating this rule is subject to disciplinary action by the Referee, Travel VP, or Director of Coaching.
- No one will be permitted behind either goal or goal area during the game.

Awards Night – Held at the end of the season usually in early January (SECJSA runs and sets the date). The following teams should plan on attending:

- SEJSCA District winners
- CT Cup Champions

24 HOUR RULE - The 24 hour rule states that coaches will not discuss a game, or situation in a game, until at least 24 hours after the fact. Parents/guardians are prohibited to confront a coach, team, player, board member, or league official to discuss any “negative” game or practice situation(s) with the coaching and Board of Directors until at least 24 hours has passed from the completion of the game or practice. A confrontation shall consist of any conversation, which is elevated from a normal speaking tone and demeanor to one which involves yelling, profanity, or derogatory comments toward said coach, team, player, board member or official.

CSC Meetings

Board Meetings are held monthly, and ALL are welcome. A list of dates / times is available on the CSC website.

Additional Requirements

CSC is run entirely by volunteers. From time to time, you will be asked to help with various tasks. If asked, we expect you to do your part to ensure that we can give your child the very best experience possible. Unlike many other soccer clubs, CSC has decided to not utilize paid vendors or attached bonds to volunteer tasks. Volunteer tasks include but are not limited to:

- Field Setup (Early spring and mid-July)
- CSC Tournament (End of October or 1st Weekend of November)
- Team specific tasks

Required Documents

The following is a list of required documents for player participation:

1. CSC Medical Release - Part of the registration form and can be completed electronically.
2. Copy of the player's birth certificate (first year players only)
3. Tournament Medical Release(s) (provided by team manager at tournament sign-up)
4. CSC Code of Conduct form – The Code of Conduct must be completed by ALL parents/guardians, players, and coaches by August 1st of the calendar year.
5. Background Check – Completed by Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, and any parent that assists with on-field activities (Must be completed once every three years). The background checks are administered through CJSA. To complete a background check, go to the member services tab on CJSA.org, then select risk management. Click on the link to the background check and enter the requested information.
6. Player Pass Photograph (Collected by the team manager)

Helpful Tips

- Always keep your child's conflict jersey in his or her backpack, storing it in a zip lock bag is advised (Bring it to all games)
- Jewelry of any kind is not allowed during games or practices.

- It is not a good idea to get your child's ears pierced right before or during the season because they will have to remove them for practices and games.
- Buy extra socks and have them available during games.
- Bring all equipment to every practice and game; e.g., ball, shin guards, and water.

Links

- Colchester Youth Soccer: <http://www.colchestersoccer.org>
- SECJSA: www.SECJSA.org
- Connecticut Junior Soccer Association: www.CJSA.org
- US Youth Soccer : www.usyouthsoccer.org