

# **IFFC Play-Up Policy**

**1. Philosophy:** IFFC believes that players develop best at their age-appropriate level. Though uncommon, some talented players are developmentally, physically, and psychologically ready for play at an older age level (a "play-up").

## **2. Play-Up Requests:**

**A.** Play-up requests must be submitted by a parent/guardian of the relevant player to the IFFC Director of Coaching (DOC) and Executive Director (ED) by email (jjohnson@iffcsoccer.org and aminton@iffcsoccer.org) and:

- i.** Acknowledge that the parents/guardians and the player have read this policy,
- ii.** Identify the older age group where the player desires to play, and
- iii.** State why the player should be considered for playing up.

**B.** Successful play-up requests to top-tier teams will highlight the development of elite players who may not sufficiently develop at their regular age group.

**C.** Play-up requests must be submitted every seasonal year, regardless of past evaluations.

## **3. Play-Up Request Evaluation:**

**A. Evaluator:** Play-up evaluations will be overseen by the DOC and/or ED. If a conflict of interest may exist, the IFFC Executive Director will designate a replacement.

**B. Evaluation:** Player evaluation will occur during the club assessment period, by game observations during the prior season(s), or a combination of both. If this cannot happen, the DOC/ED is responsible for ensuring a meaningful setting is provided for player evaluation.

**C. Evaluation Criteria:** Evaluation will be based on the player's developmental, physical, and psychological readiness to play at the older age level, including the player's safety when competing against older players. Evaluation by the DOC/ED must determine that the player is among the strongest in their natural age group (top 15%) and that playing in the older age group best supports the player's development. Only one year play-up requests will be considered. The DOC/ED will report the evaluation process and results to parents/guardians and relevant coaches. The IFFC registrar will maintain all relevant records and consult with IYSA for approval, if needed.

## **4. Additional Considerations/Information:**

**A.** IFFC may choose to form blended teams from adjacent age groups in order to accommodate team formation (e.g., when there are not enough players in an age group to form another team at that age or to improve the experience for club level teams). Such situations will not be considered play-ups.

**B.** The IFFC DOC/ED may choose to "grandfather" players who have played-up prior to the current revision of this policy, enabling those players to continue to play with those same teams without subsequent consideration each year.