

AMERICAN RIVER FC

AGE GROUP CHANGE

Dear Parents,

As you may or may not have heard, starting with the 2026-27 season, US Soccer, US Club Soccer, and NorCal Premier have made the decision to switch team formation from the current birth year model (January 1 - December 31) to one based on the academic year (August 1 – July 31). (See Attached Age Group Matrix.)

All member clubs of our league are making this change to be complaint with the new age group mandate.

The reason for this change is to have kids playing soccer with their school-grade peers. This also prevents some kids from being “trapped.” That is, from playing with kids in an older grade. For example, an 8th grader who plays on a team comprised mostly of 9th graders does not have a team to play with during the winter months while high school soccer is happening. The same issue holds true for some juniors, who play on teams with mostly seniors and are then left without a team their final year.

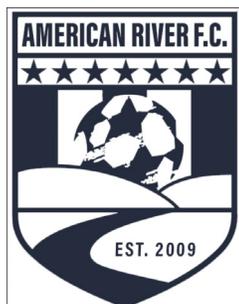
Club leadership, along with the coaching staff, is currently:

Reviewing all current rosters and birthdates to project how the shift will affect teams at each level with the purpose of making the smoothest transition possible in each age group.

Planning to hold “academic year” age group training sessions in the spring, so players and families can get a sense of the change.

We are working diligently to ensure a smooth transition for the players and families in our club and will continue to work to support the development of our teams and players.

We understand there will be some cases where a decision will need to be made due to an extenuating circumstance, and in those cases common sense will be used.



Sincerely,

Troy Topping, President

Rick Carrigan, Director of Coaching

Alex Gonzalez, Youth Academy Director