

Bend FC- Competitive Program

General Guideline Regarding Playing Time

The Bend FC Competitive Program is designed to develop each player's technical ability, tactical understanding, and overall soccer IQ, while also creating opportunities for teams to compete at the highest possible level. In support of this mission, Bend FC Technical Committee has established the following minimum playing time guidelines.

1. Minimum Playing Time Standards

A) 9v9:

Coaches will strive to play each player a minimum of 50% of total game time over the course of the season. This is over the course of a season and not per game, not per tournament, and not per league.

This guideline does not apply to Cup matches or tournament finals. However, coaches will make every reasonable effort to include all players in these matches.

B) 11v11:

Coaches will strive to play each player a minimum of 35% of total game time over the course of the season. This is over the course of a season and not per game, not per tournament, and not per league.

This guideline does not apply to Cup matches or tournament finals. When substitution rules allow, coaches will make reasonable efforts to include all players in these matches.

If a coach or director feels a player is unable to keep up, speed, skill, mentally, or physically, the coach and/or DOC should evaluate if the player needs to shift to a team where they can find more success. Sometimes a player is placed wrong at tryouts and/or sometimes a player's teammates grow at a speed faster than the individual player. In these cases a DOC can move a player to an environment that better suits that player's development. Bend FC's Director of Coaching may move a player at any time during the season.

1. A) Platform League Application and Competitive Priorities Statement

Participation in platform leagues requires a rigorous and highly competitive application process. As part of this process, a team's performance and results are closely evaluated. While Bend FC remains firmly committed to prioritizing long-term player development, athletic balance, and positive experiences, competitive success is also an important factor when pursuing platform league entry.

During application periods, winning may carry increased significance as teams seek to demonstrate their readiness for higher levels of competition. However, this emphasis does not replace our core developmental mission.

Head Coaches of Premier teams are granted appropriate flexibility within the established playing time and development guidelines to manage these competing priorities. Coaches are expected to thoughtfully balance:

- Meaningful and equitable playing time
- Individual player growth and confidence
- Overall team performance and competitiveness
- The strategic importance of platform league placement/entry

Throughout the season, coaches are entrusted to evaluate each situation independently and make informed decisions that best serve both the individual player and the long-term success of the program.

This balanced approach ensures that Bend FC continues to develop strong players, competitive teams, and a positive club culture.

2. Coach Discretion

Coaches reserve the right to reduce or withhold playing time due to:

- Missed practices
- Injury or illness
- Disciplinary action
- Behavioral concerns

When playing time is reduced for these reasons, it is the coach's responsibility to communicate this decision to the player's parent(s).

Expectations: Bend FC Technical Committee expects our staff to coach during games. Substituting players can be extremely difficult when coaching active games. Some coaches use apps or stop watches to help address substitutions. However, keeping an eye on these tools while coaching can be very difficult. Player safety and player development come first during active games.

Substitution Rules: Some leagues or tournaments have rules regarding substitutions. In these cases, coaches must carefully plan for the entirety of the game. Saving a substitution can be a very important tactic when coaching these games. Families can help by knowing the substitution rules of contests and coaches should address these rules before competitions.

Communication: If a coach feels a player is falling behind their teammates and a reduction of playtime has become necessary, the coach should proactively talk with the player and player family to discuss the areas the player is falling behind in. The coach should actively come up with solutions or areas the player can work on outside of practice to improve play time.

Cup Play: *If a coach feels that a player may see reduced playing time during an away Cup game, the coach should try to address this with the player and player family before they travel. Coaches should give the player and player family the opportunity of knowing before they spend money on traveling. This does NOT apply to every situation and sometimes a lack of play time is a game time decision.*

3. Maximum Playing Time and Positions

Maximum playing time is at the coach's discretion. Some players may play most or all of a match, while others may receive only the minimum playing time.

Players are not guaranteed any specific position. Coaches may assign players to positions they believe best support individual development and team success.

4. Commitment to Player Development

While the Bend FC Technical Committee has approved these minimum playing time guidelines, the Committee strongly encourages coaches to provide as much playing time as reasonably possible to support player growth, confidence, and long-term development.

5. Play Time Concerns

Families should always follow the Bend FC communication policy when concerns arise. First schedule a time to talk to the coach. If the problem isn't resolved, the coach or the family can contact the Director of Coaching. The DOC, the Coach, and the family can schedule an in person meeting to discuss the situation. Negative digital communications never solve the problem and only create negative culture amongst a team.