BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCCER ASSOCIATION

600-777 Hornby Street
Vancouver, BC V6Z 1S4
604.299.6401
info@bcsoccer.net
www.bcsoccer.net

BC Soccer Policy

Policy Type	Operational Policy
Created	June 2022
Revised	July2026
Reviewed	Annually
Policy Name	**Playing Up and Down Policy**

Policy Statement

BC Soccer promotes a player first approach to player development, allowing players to play in the most suitable age group for their overall individual development and soccer experience.

Purpose

To ensure BC Soccer and BC Soccer members and affiliated organizations have effective processes in place to allow for appropriate playing up and/or down to promote appropriate player development.

Standards

The BC Soccer rules and regulations governing the registration of players include the following:

1. Players may not register in an age group that is lower than the age attained by January 1st of the season ending.
2. Players are not restricted to registering in an age group higher than the age attained by January 1st of the season ending.
3. Players can play down an age group under the following circumstances:
    a. A player that is physically or cognitively challenged/disabled and unable to positively participate at their designated chronological age group.
    b. A player that does not have a playing environment available in their designated chronological age group.
    c. A player whose current stage of player development is deemed below their designated chronological age group.
4. Players can play up an age group under the following circumstances:
    a. A player does not have a playing environment available to them at their designated chronological age group.
    b. The players' current stage of player development is deemed above their designated chronological age group.
5. Entire teams are not permitted to play in any program/division/league that is an age category higher or lower than the age category determined by the birthdate of the team's players, per BC Soccer's Rule 2 - Player Age Limits.
6. The designated technical lead for the club must have on file a completed BC Soccer Playing Up and Down Form.
7. Where a player plays up, the team must implement the following equal or minimum playing time for the underage players:
    a. Under 6 to Under 12: equal playing time
    b. Under 13 to Under 18: minimum playing time of 50% (over duration of entire season not one match)

8. Where a player plays down, that player cannot participate in any Provincial Cup competition outside of their chronological age group.

Definitions

- Chronological age category: a set period that groups player together based on their birth year and/or birth month. For example, January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2000.

- Stage of player development: the level of a player's ability, including technical, tactical, physical, and social/emotional attributes to play the game.

- Playing Down: whereby a player is deemed suitable to play in a chronological age category below their own designated chronological age category.

- Playing Up: whereby a player is deemed suitable to play in a chronological age category above their own designated chronological age category.

- Disability - According to the traditional bio-medical approach, disability is viewed as a medical or health problem that prevents or reduces a person's ability to participate fully in society. In contrast, the social approach views disability as a natural part of society, where attitudes, stigmas, and prejudices present barriers to people with disabilities, and prevent or hinder their participation in mainstream society. (Reference - Canada Employment Social Development/Programs - Disability Guide)

Guidelines
N/A

Applicable Operational Procedures
N/A

Compliance to BC Soccer Governing Documents

In accordance with BC Soccer's "*Bylaws 3.4.a.ii",* all member organizations must comply with the applicable Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, policies, decisions and directives of BC Soccer and the statutes, bylaws, regulations, directives and decisions of Canada Soccer, FIFA at all times.

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