



STANDARDS

STRUCTURE--

- Geographic & Market Area:** Metropolitan area, statewide, or portions of contiguous states. Close enough proximity that generally no overnight stays are required.
- Leagues in Area:** One Premier League sanctioned per area. Premier Leagues shall generally not overlap each other geographically.
- League Selection:** Teams may only play in one Premier League. Once a team commits to a Premier League, the team may only move to a different Premier League with US Club Soccer's pre-approval.
- Team Composition:** Premier Leagues shall generally include the most competitive teams in the geographic area, and may include clubs also in the USSDA, ECNL, and NPL. Preference in team acceptance shall be given to teams that are part of a club (see Youth Club Standards).
- Schedule of Games:** Conduct a year around league competitive program. The schedule shall provide no more than one game per day for league competition.
- Playing Divisions:** Premier Leagues may include two or more competitive divisions, with relegation/promotion between the divisions permitted. Any promotion or relegation can be team-based or club-based, and need not be solely based on competition results.
- League Integration** In some cases, an NPL and Premier League may be combined, with the NPL serving as the league's first division, and the Premier League serving as the League's second division.

PROGRAMS--

- Age Groups: Premier Leagues shall endeavor to include U-10 to U-18 minimum, but must include a minimum of five (5) age groups. Premier Leagues may be for one gender.
- Rec Program: Premier Leagues are encouraged to organize a recreational division, or work with a recreational affiliate program.
- Adult Program: Premier Leagues are encouraged to organize an adult division, or to work with an adult affiliate program.
- Player Development: Premier Leagues may qualify to operate a Player Development Program (PDP) for the league, contingent upon meeting US Club Soccer's standards for PDP sanctioning. Any other player development or coach education programs require US Club Soccer approval.
- id² Program: Premier Leagues will be integrated into the id² National Identification and Development Program.

OTHER COMPETITIONS--

- State Cups: Premier Leagues in selected markets may operate a State Cup competition on behalf of US Club Soccer, contingent upon meeting US Club Soccer State Cup criteria and standards.
- National Cup: Premier League teams may qualify for National Cup-Finals berths based upon the National Cup Finals qualification process for the current playing season. Notwithstanding this, Premier Leagues shall promote participation and avoid scheduling conflicts for National Cup Regionals within the region.
- Regional Championship: Qualifiers from every Premier League in a geographic region will have the opportunity to compete in a Premier League Regional Championship event to crown a regional champion, and eventually move on to a Premier League National Championship event.

GOVERNANCE--

- Business & Marketing Plan:** Premier Leagues shall have clear mission statements and recurring five year business plans with short and long-term goals and objectives. Premier Leagues shall also have a 5-year budget and an annual profit and loss statement, which are subject to US Club Soccer review.
- Board of Directors:** Premier Leagues shall be operated and administered by executive staff, but must have Club Directors of Coaching represented on the Board, or on a League Advisory Board.
- Legal Structure:** Non-profit; or for-profit with US Club Soccer approval.
- Documents:** Premier Leagues must meet all corporate legal requirements. Premier League Bylaws discipline rules, roster and playing rules, and club guidelines and standards must be approved by US Club Soccer.

ADMINISTRATION--

- Staff:** At a minimum, Premier Leagues must have a compensated CEO/Executive Director, ideally employed full time, as well as a part-time website administrator, adequate support staff, and a published organizational chart.
- Referees:** Premier Leagues must provide a process for centralized referee assignments or assignment oversight, and must provide support for referee development programs.
- Office:** Premier Leagues must have a dedicated office, open during normal business hours.
- Website:** Premier Leagues must have a dedicated website with regularly updated information, an online game schedule, online and current; standings, and online team registration capabilities.