



## VIA EMAIL

July 21, 2016

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer

**Re:** BC Soccer Short Term Event Player Permit

In follow up to BC Soccer's 2016 Annual General Meeting where the membership approved rule amendments to introduce the BC Soccer Short Term Event Player Permit, BC Soccer has updated the relevant forms and processes to action these rule amendments.

### Recap – What is the BC Soccer Short Term Event Player Permit?

- As defined in BC Soccer's Rules & Regulations, a "BC Soccer Short-Term Event Player Permit" shall mean a permit which enables an (unregistered) player to participate in a BC Soccer sanctioned event that lasts no longer than 10 days

This means that member organizations and/or affiliated clubs now have the ability to permit individuals whom are otherwise not registered with BC Soccer (via a Youth District Association or Adult League) to participate solely in a sanctioned tournament or exhibition / friendly matches.

### Overview – Key Points

- Players who receive a Short Term Event Player Permit ARE NOT REGISTERED players. They cannot participate in any sanctioned youth or adult league, including cup competitions.
- A Short Term Event Player Permit MUST be approved by BC Soccer in order for an individual to participate in a BC Soccer sanctioned tournament or exhibition match
- A Short Term Event Player Permit is required each time an unregistered player would like to participate in a BC Soccer sanctioned tournament or exhibition match
- A Short Term Event Player Permit can be used for unregistered players to travel out of province with properly affiliated teams/member organizations
- Short Term Event Player Permits may only be requested by member organizations or affiliated clubs, NOT individual teams, coaches, players, or parents

### DETAIL – FOR TOURNAMENTS

BC Soccer has updated the Tournament Application/Sanctioning form to notify members that individuals can participate in tournaments lasting no longer than 10 days, what the tournament host is required to do, and to advise:

- A form to request Short Term Event Player Permits and provide participant information will be provided to the Tournament/Event Registrar (Main Contact) when the Tournament Application/Sanctioning is approved. It is also available on BC Soccer's website: <https://bcsoccer.net/documents-forms>
- The fee per Short Term Event Player Permit per player permit is \$15.
- The Tournament/Event Registrar (Main Contact) is responsible to submit Short Term Event Player Permit participant information and fees a minimum of 5 days prior to the tournament's start date.
- There is no limit to the number of times an individual can participate in tournaments using a Short Term Event Player Permit; however, the \$15 fee must be paid for each time

#### **DETAIL – FOR EXHIBITION MATCHES**

BC Soccer has created a Short Term Event Player Permit request form for members to use to enable unregistered participants the ability to participate in an exhibition match with properly affiliated teams, organizations, and registered players.

- A form to request Short Term Event Player Permits for exhibition matches is available on BC Soccer's website: <https://bcsoccer.net/documents-forms>
- There is a one time per player annual (April 1 - March 31) \$15 fee for each BC Soccer Short Term Event Player Permit Requested for exhibition matches within province. (For subsequent exhibition matches, the Player Permit must be requested; however, the fee does not need to be paid again.)
- This completed form (in electronic format) and payment must be submitted to BC Soccer 1 business day prior to the Exhibition Match date.

#### **DETAIL – FOR APPLICATIONS TO TRAVEL OUT OF PROVINCE**

BC Soccer has updated the Application to Travel Out of Province forms to enable unregistered players to travel out of province with a properly affiliated teams, organizations and registered players to participate in an affiliated, sanctioned tournament that lasts no longer than 10 days or exhibition match(es).

- The updated forms to Travel Out of Province are available on BC Soccer's website: <https://bcsoccer.net/documents-forms>
- The fee per Short Term Event Player Permit per player permit is \$15 (in addition to Application to Travel Out of Province fees)
- ALL Short Term Event Player Permit participant information is required for BC Soccer approval
- Players travelling on Short Term Event Player Permit DO count towards total roster limits

## **Questions & Clarifications**

***If an individual participates in an Exhibition match and pays the fee then, do they have to pay again to participate in a tournament?***

Yes. On an annual basis (April 1 to March 31), the \$15 fee must be paid the first time a player participates in an Exhibition Match. The fee must also be paid for every tournament a player participates in and/or every time a player wishes to travel out of province using a Short Term Event Player Permit.

***Can International Exchange students use Short Term Event Player Permits? Is an International Transfer Certificate required?***

Yes, to participate in a tournament or exhibition match only. An International Transfer Certificate is not required because the player is not registering with BC Soccer.

***Does a sanctioned tournament have to offer Short Term Event Player Permits?***

A sanctioned tournament is not required to provide this as an option to allow unregistered players the ability to participate in their tournament; however, BC Soccer encourages members to provide this option to play as means to grow the game and encourage active participation at every age level.

***If a tournament allows Short Term Event Player Permits, will those players need to have a Player ID card?***

BC Soccer's Rules & Regulations only require Player ID cards for registered players aged U13 and older. It is the tournament host's/member organization's discretion to require photo ID of players who are participating on Short Term Event Player Permit.

***Can an unregistered player participate in a tournament on two different teams if the player receives and pays for two Short Term Event Player Permits?***

No, an individual is only allowed to participate in a tournament using a Short Term Event Player Permit for one team at any one time.

***Can a registered player use a Short Term Event Player Permit to play on a different team, or on two teams in a tournament?***

No, Short Term Event Player Permits are ONLY for participants who are unregistered.



***What happens if a player participating on Short Term Event Player Permit receives a red card and/or discipline?***

As with other disciplinary matters, the player would go the discipline process via the appropriate Member Organization, or, depending on the matter (i.e. assault on a match official), through BC Soccer.

Lastly, BC Soccer would like to make the membership aware that BC Soccer has also updated its Associate Membership Application and Renewal forms (the Short Term Event category now has its own separate application and renewal form):

- Associate Membership Application Form
- Associate Membership Renewal Form
  
- Associate Membership Application Short Term (10 days or less) Event
- Associate Membership Renewal Short Term (10 days or less) Event

These new and updated forms are available on BC Soccer's website: <https://bcsoccer.net/becoming-a-member>.

For more background information on the Short Term Event Player Permits, please read the whitepaper (previously circulated), in the pages following this communication. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lori D'Andrea, Director of Community Development.

Kind Regards,

BC Soccer



## **BC SOCCER RECOMMENDATION: SHORT-TERM EVENTS, PLAYER REGISTRATION & REFEREES**

### **OVERVIEW**

*This document proposes amendments to BC Soccer Short-Term Events regulations to clarify current rules, simplify administration, ensure better compliance with FIFA/Canada Soccer/BC Soccer rules, and allow Members to apply to give unregistered players the right to play in sanctioned short-term events.*

**FEBRUARY 2016**

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

The soccer community in BC arranges and participates in numerous tournaments (short-term events, up to ten days) which BC Soccer sanctions based on application. In addition to events arranged directly by its members and affiliated clubs, BC Soccer also receives sanctioning applications from other organizations, who wish to receive the benefits of membership, especially access to registered referees, just for the duration of the event, and registered referees wish to officiate and earn income from such events.

As a condition of its membership in Canada Soccer, BC Soccer has the statutory responsibility to ensure FIFA and Canada Soccer rules are followed in organised soccer in British Columbia, some of which affect how such events are conducted.

These governing body rules include:

### FIFA: Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players: Article 5 Registration

1. *A player must be registered at an association to play for a club as either a professional or an amateur in accordance with the provisions of article 2. Only registered players are eligible to participate in organised football. By the act of registering, a player agrees to abide by the statutes and regulations of FIFA, the confederations and the associations.*

*\* Definitions Section 6 states that **organised football** is:*

***“Association football organised under the auspices of FIFA, the confederations and the associations, or authorised by them.”***

### Canada Soccer Association Rules:

#### **5.13 Registration of Amateur Players**

- a) *Restriction of Players i. All players must be registered in order to compete.*

#### **20.9 Appointments**

- a) *Registered Referees shall not officiate in any Competition or League which is not sanctioned or a Match in which unaffiliated clubs compete.*

### BC Soccer Rules & Regulations

#### **RULE 18 - TOURNAMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS**

*c) Entry into an approved tournament(s) shall be limited to teams, which are properly affiliated with this Association and/or other Provincial/State Associations. Teams participating from outside the jurisdiction of BC Soccer must first receive the written approval from the Provincial or State Association of which they are affiliated. Only properly registered players, in good standing shall be permitted to participate in the tournament.*

The FIFA/Canada Soccer/BC Soccer regulatory framework which BC Soccer has the statutory obligation to ensure is followed within its domain is very clear - in order to participate in sanctioned soccer, all players must be registered, and registered referees must only referee sanctioned matches.

BC Soccer constantly receives requests from members and others to:

1. Sanction events not organized by members
2. Sanction events that will have unregistered players
3. Allow referees to officiate in non-member events

The approach taken in recent years is that applications for sanctioning must include approval from members, who are given the responsibility to enforce compliance with Rules and Regulations by the tournament organizers. This approach has proven to be very problematic:

- A. It is clear that members are not aware that by signing off they are taking on the responsibility of carrying out the function of ensuring compliance with rules, and they do not want to have this responsibility.
- B. In a number of cases, members are being sued over occurrences at tournaments which they have endorsed and “signed-off”.

To ensure improved member service, compliance and appropriately encourage the growth of soccer, BC Soccer needs to review and modify its operating practices. This paper proposes an approach to bring this about.

## **FIFA AND CANADA SOCCER FRAMEWORK**

While the written regulatory framework described above is very clear, precedence has been set whereby FIFA/Canada Soccer grants numerous exemptions to these rules. BC Soccer has the ability to amend its rules and policies to allow it to grant some exemptions similar to FIFA/Canada Soccer practices, within its own jurisdiction, conditional upon complying with rules in other regards, and conditional upon the scope of the exemptions being strictly for resident BC players, as Canada Soccer and other national associations have exclusive domain over players who live outside of BC.

A clear example of Canada Soccer/FIFA granting such an exemption is university and college soccer. Post-secondary institutions do not register players with Canada Soccer or FIFA, but nonetheless FIFA/Canada Soccer direct that registered referees officiate at these games. FIFA directs its members to supply referees for international university competition, and Canada Soccer directs BC Soccer to schedule referees for all college and university soccer in BC, even though players do not register with BC Soccer, Canada Soccer or FIFA (except if by coincidence they also play community soccer).

Canada Soccer and FIFA also allow unregistered players to participate in soccer in two other situations:

1. Within certain provisions unregistered players can apply for permission to participate in matches sanctioned by the national body, under a system referred as “scratch” teams and players (i.e. American Masters Games).
2. The FIFA “Live Your Goals” festivals and other initiatives seeking to engage prospective players.

## RECOMMENDATION

To improve compliance with our own and our governing bodies' requirements, and to ease the administrative responsibilities of our membership, we should modify how applications for sanctioning of Short-Term Events should be handled. Short-term events are defined as follows:

A short-term event is soccer activity lasting a maximum of 10 days. Short-term events are primarily tournaments, but also include one-off exhibition games. *(Note 1)*

For the majority of short-term events, there will be no change to the current regulations. Current grey areas are addressed, some regulations are eased, but we must also commit to ensure much better compliance with clear FIFA, Canada Soccer and BC Soccer regulations.

Four kinds of events are defined:

### **1. Events of Multi-Sport Organizations (MSOs) and Disability Sport Organizations (DSOs)**

Soccer is often one sport among many arranged by multi-sport organizations which have their own procedures for registration, governance, discipline, etc., i.e. are self-governing. BC Soccer already has a membership category for MSOs/DSOs, which offers these members access to referees and other benefits. These members include BC High School Sports, Colleges and Universities *(2)* and BC Special Olympics, the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council and the BC Seniors Games. *(3)*

For matches within their competitions, with teams only from within their own membership, these members do not need to apply for Short-Term event membership. BC Soccer/Canada Soccer registered referees are allowed to officiate in any of their matches. Only provincially/nationally recognized MSO/DSO bodies are eligible for this category.

The rules governing the eligibility and conduct of players and team officials must be under the control of the management committee (or similar) of the Competition, subject to the overriding authority of The Association or PSO concerned and shall in so far as practical be in conformity with the rules.

### **2. Events Organized by BC Soccer Members**

This category of events is primarily covered in BC Soccer Rule 18 – Tournament Rules and Regulations. These events include:

- Tournaments arranged by BC Soccer members or affiliated clubs, including associate members, which would be managed as now through an application to host a tournament
- Other organizations, excluding unaffiliated soccer clubs or leagues, arranging a soccer event, competition or tournament. Examples the "Nations Cup" or "Beach Blast". Such non-members would, as now, apply for "Short-Term Event" member status, and agree to meet all requirements of membership of the organised soccer family.

As part of "organised football", tournaments arranged by BC Soccer members (year-round or short-term) must adhere to the rules stating "Only properly registered players, in good standing



shall be permitted to participate in the tournament” and other requirements of BC Soccer and higher bodies.

It has become apparent that tournament hosts often do not seem to be aware they have these obligations as part of organized soccer. Accordingly, communication of these requirements must be strengthened in application documentation, and acceptance of these rules be acknowledged by applicants.

However, following the FIFA/Canada Soccer lead, and some other PSOs (e.g., Alberta Soccer), BC Soccer can extend the definition of registered players beyond (season-long) registered players to include “short-term event” players allowed to play via BC Soccer temporary player permit only in a named sanctioned tournament or match.

This would be affected by introducing a new “BC Soccer Short-Term Event Player Permit” (STP), giving players approved by BC Soccer the right to participate in that sanctioned event only, (a sanctioned tournament or sanctioned exhibition game). These players would be deemed eligible to participate in that event as if they were a registered player. BC Soccer would accept applications for STPs of unregistered players from any active member, affiliated club or associate member. Applications will not be allowed through unaffiliated clubs, nor can individual players apply directly for permits. It is entirely within Members’/affiliated clubs’ rights to apply for STPs or not, at their discretion. BC Soccer will set a per player fee payable for each event. (4)

As a part of this BC Soccer’s Rule 18 c) would be changed to include the wording highlighted in yellow:

#### **RULE 18 - TOURNAMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS**

*c) Entry into an approved tournament(s) shall be limited to teams, which are properly affiliated with this Association and/or other Provincial/State Associations. Teams participating from outside the jurisdiction of BC Soccer must first receive the written approval from the Provincial or State Association of which they are affiliated. Only properly registered players, or those players who have been granted a BC Soccer Short-Term Event Player Permit and are in good standing shall be permitted to participate in the tournament.*

In addition, Active Members/Affiliated clubs are entitled to host a festival to reach out to unregistered players. This could be a community event such as “Discover Your Sport”, a short introduction to soccer, or a “Live Your Goals” kind of festival. This kind of event must be very limited, e.g., children are only there for a few hours, and be largely training/coach-led activity. It strictly cannot be used for any soccer event with a schedule of games.

### **3. Events Organized by Soccer Bodies Not BC Soccer Members**

Unaffiliated soccer clubs or leagues or other ongoing soccer bodies which choose not to be members of BC Soccer are strictly not eligible for short-term event membership or tournament sanctioning. Referees are not permitted to officiate their games. There can be no exemption for an organization not prepared to pay the fees or not being willing to follow the rules and conditions that apply to all other members of organized soccer. To do otherwise would be completely contrary to FIFA regulations.

#### 4. Referees for Charitable or Social Soccer Activities.

As a popular sport, soccer is occasionally used as part of a community festival or charitable or social activity. For example, a soccer club may have a game to raise money for cancer research, a municipality, company, union or recognized community group may hold a purely recreational soccer game or games as part of a larger event and wish them to be properly officiated. If soccer is secondary to the purpose of the event, the organization will be able to apply for special dispensation to use BC Soccer/Canada Soccer registered referees. It must be evident that the purpose is not a soccer competition or event - soccer must be very secondary to the event's purpose, with an over-riding social or community purpose. (5)

Individual matches (not Competition matches) may be played for charity or some similar object approved by The Association or PSO in accordance with BC Soccer RULE 14 – CHARITY COMPETITIONS.

In addition, given the strong political and social imperative for Canadian society to fully involve First Nations in broader communities and activities, and soccer's rich history within First Nations groups, the BC Soccer Board (only) may approve events or programs with First Nations to ease and make possible eventual full participation of First Nations in the broader soccer community.

#### Notes:

1. *Any soccer program involving scheduled games over a period lasting longer than ten days is defined as a league, regardless of whether scores are kept, and/or what the league is called. If there is a schedule of fixtures over longer than a ten-day period, the program is subject to the regulations which govern leagues. Cup competitions arranged by leagues are also considered part of the league. Accordingly, any scheduled "series of exhibition games" over more than 10 days is a league, and is subject to all league play regulations.*
2. *There is a specific associate member category for Colleges and universities, "Post-Secondary Institutions", which is treated for these rules as a component of the broader MSO category.*
3. *Soccer in the BC Summer and BC Winter Games events are directly arranged by BC Soccer and are therefore an official competition of BC Soccer. As an Association competition, all players must be registered.*
4. *The fee is yet to be set. Applications would need to be made x days in advance of the event. There is no limit to the number of applications that may be made for an individual player in a playing season. The fee would be payable for each event. Members travelling to an event outside BC (e.g., in a US tournament) must include any permitted players on travel applications*
5. *This allowance is only to be used for "one-off" special events, with a broader social purpose, e.g., a charitable, fund-raising activity by a soccer body, or if soccer is a small part of a larger event organized by a non-soccer group for other purposes.*