



BC SOCCER

BC Soccer

Canada Soccer Club Licensing

2024 Guidelines

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1. Introduction

a. Background

The Canada Soccer Club Licensing Program was introduced in 2017 and is designed to guide member organizations across the country toward best practices for organizational development both on and off the field. The aim is to raise the standards of member organizations, enhance the daily playing environment, and improve participant experiences, thereby improving the overall soccer system in Canada.

The primary goals of the Canada Soccer Club Licensing Program are to:

- Set clearly defined standards and expectations for member organizations.
- Recognize excellence in the soccer community.
- Raise the level of all soccer organizations throughout Canada.
- Drive change in the soccer system.

The Canada Soccer Club Licensing designations cover governance, infrastructure, administration, and, as of 2024, technical criteria applicable to youth soccer programming in Canada and the provinces. In British Columbia, the designations below the National Youth Club Licence are administered by BC Soccer in alignment with and in partnership with Canada Soccer. They currently include:

- National Youth Club Licence (NYCL)
- Member Association Youth Club Licence Level 2 (MA2)
- Member Association Youth Club Licence Level 1 (MA1)
- Quality Soccer Provider (QSP)

The technical requirements incorporated into the club licensing stream within BC Soccer are covered in this document and focus on the following:

- BC Soccer Premier League (U14 to U18)
- Skill Centre Program (U10 to U13)
- Grassroots Standards (U6 to U18)

b. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide BC Soccer members and affiliated organizations with the requirements, process, timelines, and supporting documentation related to their club licensing designation that they aspire to obtain or need to maintain.

This document provides information on the levels of designation and the associated technical requirements, as well as the process incorporated across Canada Soccer and BC Soccer and how it applies within the BC Soccer membership. Furthermore, the appendix includes resources and templates covering policies and codes of conduct, as well as other resources required in the license application process. This includes player, coach, and referee development items such as age-appropriate curricula, profiles for development and identification, and points to applicable technical rules and regulations as well as technical policy.

2. Designations

a. Overview

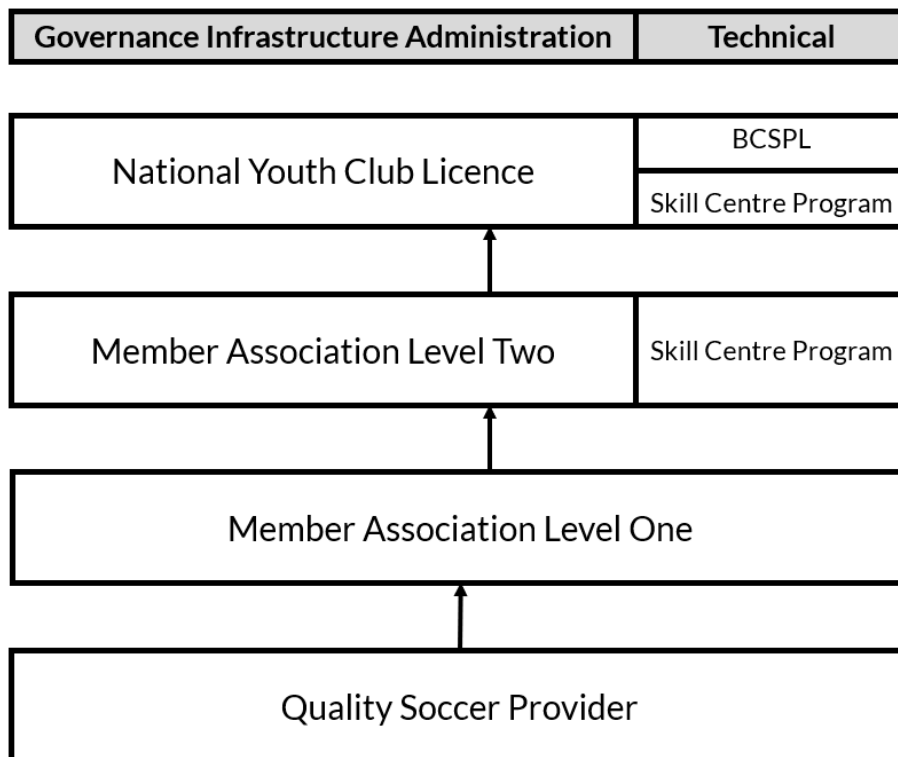
In British Columbia, the minimum level of 'Quality Soccer Provider' designation was required by September 2023, regardless of the club's playing season. These requirements cover governance, including BC Soccer rules and regulations, as well as associated policies; essentially, they refer to the requirements of being a BC Soccer member or affiliated club.

Once an affiliate club achieves the 'Quality Soccer Provider' status, it can apply to become a Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 1, then a Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 2, and finally a National Youth Club Licence.

It is important to note that there are technical requirements associated with being a Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 2, including a Skill Centre Program standard, and a National Youth Club Licence holder must be part of the BC Soccer Premier League (BCSPL) and meet the technical requirements of the league, as well as achieve Skill Centre Program standards.

For a snapshot of this process, please see the chart below.

Canada Soccer Club Licensing Designations Chart



b. Quality Soccer Provider

The Canada Soccer [Standards for Quality Soccer Providers](#) outline the minimum expectations of member organizations in Canada. It is expected that all member organizations provide a developmentally appropriate, safe, enjoyable, accessible, inclusive, and welcoming playing environment for their participants, which distinguishes them from non-member soccer and unorganized play. To be considered a Quality Soccer Provider, member organizations must also be in good standing with their governing organization(s) and meet membership expectations.

c. Member Association Level One

The [Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 1](#) of the Canada Soccer Club Licensing Program builds on the characteristics and behaviors outlined in the Canada Soccer Standards for Quality Soccer Providers, with a balance of expectations across governance, administration, infrastructure, and technical pillars. The characteristics and behaviors of the Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 1 are designed to recognize high-quality grassroots, community, and competitive organizations that have developed their governance and operations. Organizations achieving the Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 1 demonstrate their commitment to quality and to providing an enhanced participant experience.

d. Member Association Level Two

The [Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 2](#) of the Canada Soccer Club Licensing Program identifies organizations committed to achieving the highest expectations of the Grassroots, Community, and Competitive Streams and targets those aspiring to move into the Development/Performance Stream. Organizations achieving the Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 2 make an enhanced commitment across each pillar, which requires significant resources.

e. National Youth Club Licence

The [Canada Soccer National Youth Club Licence](#) recognizes the highest-achieving organizations across Canada and rewards them with the Canada Soccer Approved Youth Soccer Club endorsement and associated [MLS Home Grown Player benefits](#). Organizations achieving this licence display characteristics and demonstrate behaviors aligned with the highest expectations of governance, administration, infrastructure, and technical standards. They support their Member Association and Canada Soccer Pathways and participate in the highest level of competition in Canada, the Canada Soccer Player Development Program.

In British Columbia, the highest level of youth competition is the BC Soccer Premier League (BCSPL). It is important to note that participating clubs in the BCSPL have received Canada Soccer's National Youth Club Licence (NYCL), which covers administration, governance, infrastructure, and technical criteria. Receiving this designation from Canada Soccer, in addition to gaining BC Soccer Board of Directors' approval, allows for BCSPL participation. Additionally, participating clubs must also comply with the BCSPL league rules and regulations. By receiving Canada Soccer's National Youth Club Licence and complying with the BCSPL rules and regulations, participating clubs demonstrate adherence to quality standards and operation at the highest level of community youth soccer within British Columbia and Canada. As part of this process, in September 2023, BC Soccer introduced the BCSPL Implementation Plan for aspiring clubs to demonstrate their viability to deliver a BCSPL program. BCSPL organizations must also meet the Skill Centre Program requirements, which apply to programming for U10-U13 and were introduced in August 2024.

3. Technical Requirements

a. Overview

The technical requirements for the various designations are embedded in BC Soccer rules and regulations as well as technical policy. For a snapshot of what is typically applicable to the specific designation, please see the chart below:

Designation	Technical Requirements
BCSPL (U14 to U18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Grassroots standards• Skill Centre Program Requirements• BCSPL Rules & Regulations
Skill Centre Program (U10 to U13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Grassroots Standards• Skill Centre Program Requirements
Grassroots Standards (U6 to U18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rules, Regulations & Policy• Small Sided Soccer Development Policy• Coach Certification Requirement Policy• Playing Up and Down Policy

b. Grassroots Standards

As mentioned earlier, in British Columbia, the minimum requirement of ‘Quality Soccer Provider’ designation was required by September 2023, regardless of the club’s playing season. These requirements cover governance within the province, including BC Soccer rules and regulations as well as associated policies; essentially, they refer to the requirements of being a BC Soccer member or affiliated club.

The associated policies that are technically led include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Small Sided Soccer Development Policy
- Coach Certification Requirement Policy
- Playing Up and Down Policy

c. Skill Centre Program

As of the 2024 season, the Skill Centre Program technical requirements that apply to BC Soccer members and affiliated organizations are included in the BC Soccer Skill Centre Program Policy.

Clubs that wish to obtain the Skill Centre Program designation must meet technical requirements for the U10 to U13 age groups regarding player, coach, and referee development. Requirements cover the delivery of general club programming, including training and competition environments as well as educational and pathway commitments.

d. BCSPL

Clubs with the National Youth Club Licence designation (BCSPL Clubs) must meet technical requirements for the U14 to U18 age groups concerning player, coach, and referee development. Requirements cover the delivery of general club programming, including training and competition environments as well as educational and pathway commitments.

4. Process & Timelines

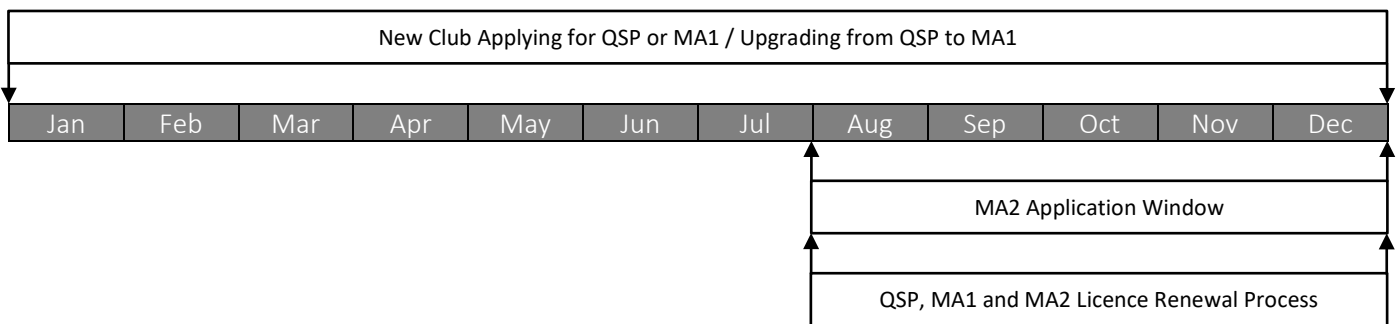
a. Application

The application process is designed to align with Canada Soccer’s overarching timelines from a national perspective. This also considers the need for application, review, designation acknowledgment, upgrading, and ongoing compliance reporting processes, which may lead to renewal or removal of the designation.

As a snapshot, the following charts provide information on the application process and timelines for the Quality Soccer Provider designation through to the National Youth Club Licence.

Quality Soccer Provider, Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level One, and Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level Two

Year 1 (Example 2024)



It is important to note the following:

- New clubs applying for Quality Soccer Provider or Member Association Level 1:
 - This can be done at any time.
- Renewing a Quality Soccer Provider, Member Association Level 1, or Level 2:
 - The formal renewal process will begin in August of the year the license expires.
- Upgrading from Quality Soccer Provider or Member Association Level 1 to Member Association Level 2:
 - Applications will open in August of each year. BC Soccer will begin the MA2 Application Review Process in January of the following year. If the club fails to meet MA2 standards, a lower-level license will be granted.
- Upgrading from Quality Soccer Provider to Member Association Level 1:
 - This can be done at any time.
- Member Association Level 2:
 - Prior to the changes outlined in this document, clubs had the ability to start the application process for MA2 at any time and from any previous level of license. Moving forward, clubs that wish to apply for an MA2 Licence will need to be an MA1 license holder for at least one year.

To apply for a National Youth Club Licence designation, a club must meet Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 2 requirements for a minimum of one year and meet the technical requirements of the BC Soccer Skill Centre Program before applying.

When applying, clubs will first communicate directly with Canada Soccer and complete the necessary requirements across governance, infrastructure, and administration. This process typically takes a minimum of one year. Once designated as a NYCL, the club can then be approved by the BC Soccer board to join the BC SPL the following September.

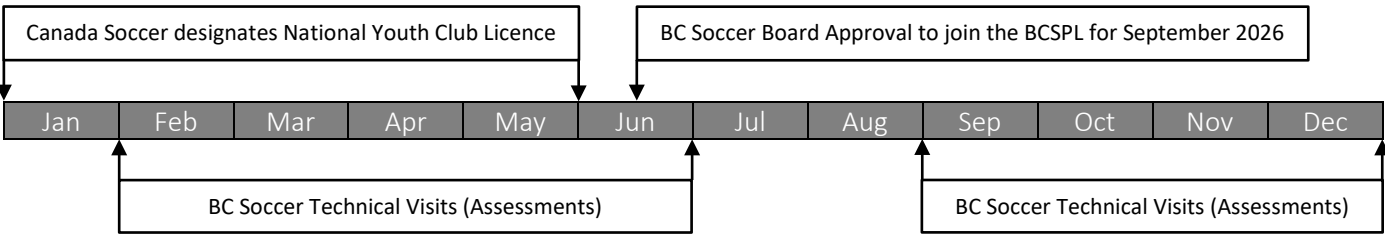
As part of the NYCL application, clubs must also participate in the ‘BC SPL Implementation Plan,’ which allows BC Soccer to review the club’s technical documentation as well as conduct technical visits and assessments against the Skill Centre Program technical policy. Furthermore, clubs must demonstrate the delivery of this policy for a minimum of two years prior to entry into the BC SPL. For a visual example of this process, please see below.

National Youth Club Licence Application Process

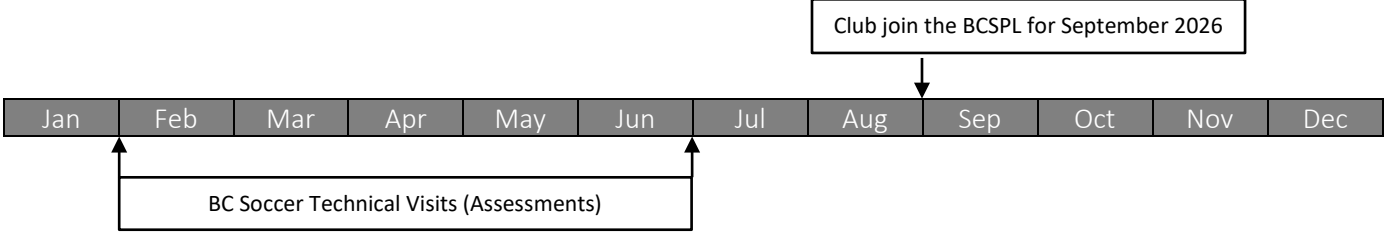
Year 1 (Example 2024)



Year 2 (Example 2025)



Year 3 (Example 2026)



b. Compliance Reporting

For all designations, there is an annual renewal process embedded in the program, which includes reporting processes to Canada Soccer. BC Soccer has a more detailed compliance reporting process in place that documents the performance of clubs for the designations of Member Association Youth Club Licence – Level 2 and the National Youth Club Licence. These are related to the requirements of the Skill Centre Program standards and participation within the BCSPL, with a focus on technical aspects.

For the National Youth Club Licence, the annual compliance report highlights any regular failings in compliance with the Skill Centre Program Policy and the BCSPL rules and regulations. These reports are used to determine a club’s status within the BCSPL and/or Skill Centre Program designation. Additionally, the compliance report is provided to Canada Soccer to support their assessment of the BCSPL clubs and/or Skill Centre Program designation against their National Youth Club Licence. If a club is removed from participation within the BCSPL or its Skill Centre Program designation is removed, Canada Soccer has confirmed that the club will also have its Canada Soccer National Youth Club Licence removed. Furthermore, if a club does not maintain its Canada Soccer National Youth Club Licence designation, it will also be removed from participation within the BCSPL.

The compliance reporting process occurs annually. For example, within the BCSPL, the compliance report includes 10 administrative and 10 technical requirements. Each requirement has a weighting of 10, totaling 100 for the calendar year. The outcomes of the annual compliance report are outlined in the chart below.

BCSPL Compliance Reporting Club Score Chart

Scoring	Status	Definition	Action
85-100	Compliant	The club has demonstrated that on a regular basis it meets most of the technical requirements to participate in the BCSPL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the following season, it is recommended that the club continue to operate in the BCSPL for the following year.
70-84	Monitoring	The club has demonstrated that on a regular basis it meets most of the technical requirements to participate in the BCSPL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the following season, it is recommended that the club continue to operate in the BCSPL while under monitoring. If the club status the following year is “Monitoring,” it may be recommended for removal from BCSPL participation the following year. With the timelines noted in the “Non-Compliant” status below.
0-69	Non-Compliant	The club has not demonstrated that on a regular basis it meets the technical requirements to participate in the BCSPL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the following season, the club will be removed from participation in the BCSPL.

5. Appendix

- a. [BC Soccer Rules & Regulations](#)
- b. [BCSPL Rules & Regulations](#)
- c. [BC Soccer Skill Centre Program Policy](#)
- d. [BC Soccer Small Sided Soccer Development Policy](#)
- e. [BC Soccer Coach Requirement Policy](#)
- f. [BC Soccer Playing Up & Down Policy](#)
- g. [BC Soccer Club Licensing FAQ and Templates](#)
- h. [BCSPL Parent Handbook 2024](#)

6. Contacts

a. Staff

To contact the appropriate BC Soccer staff member across the various areas of the club licensing program, please see the list below:

Lucas Castro, Club Engagement Coordinator, lucascastro@bcsoccer.net

- Club Licensing:
 - Governance, Infrastructure & Administration

Yasamin Alipour, Player Development Coordinator, yasaminalipour@bcsoccer.net

- Technical:
 - Skill Centre Program (U10 to U13)

Mike Salmon, Player Development Senior Coordinator, michaelsalmon@bcsoccer.net

- Technical:
 - BCSPL (U14 to U18)