

## **Senior Club Policy: Effective 2023-24.**

Any player found to have more than one membership registration (two or more member accounts/numbers) in RugbyXplorer will be immediately ineligible to play until USA Rugby can merge the records and the player confirmed as having no outstanding financial or disciplinary issues with any of the clubs/unions.

### **Key Changes: 2023-24 Regulations** (See 2023-24 Regulations document for all changes).

#### **Section 1. Terms and Definitions.**

- 20. Homegrown Player.** Any Player that began playing rugby in college or a club (youth/high school, senior) in the general locale of the Club, was registered to the Club prior to meeting the definition of Professional Player, and continues to participate with the Club.

#### **Section 2. General Eligibility Policies.**

##### **2.5.c. Policy for Under 18s/Under 19 Front Rows Playing Adult Rugby.**

Players under the age of 18 (U18) may not play Adult rugby without a waiver ([usarugby.org/eligibility/](http://usarugby.org/eligibility/)) from the Approved Governing Body. Players under the age of 19 (U19) may not play in the front row in Adult rugby without a waiver from the Approved Governing Body.

The waiver must be approved by the Approved Governing Body administrator before the player can participate in adult rugby. In addition the waiver request must be approved, and the player's eligibility status confirmed, by the appropriate Youth/High School Organization administrator.

Coaches allowing any U18/U19 Front Row player to participate in Adult rugby without the waiver are subject to sanction. This waiver requires all members of the club to be in compliance with the USA Rugby SafeSport Certification policy.

#### **Section 3. Senior Club Regulations.**

##### **3.2. Club Eligibility: NCS Qualifying Matches.**

- a. To qualify for the USA Club Rugby NCS, each team selected to represent the Approved Governing Body must:
- ii. have a registered Level 1 (formerly called Level 200) or higher coach certified with USA Rugby.
- c. NOTE: PR7s participants do not count against the Professional Player Match Roster limits noted above.

##### **3.4. Player Eligibility: NCS Qualifying Matches.**

- f. A player may not play for different teams concurrently, regardless of the division of the two teams, without the knowledge and consent of the Approved Governing Body/Bodies.
- h. The USA Rugby Competition Management System (CMS) is required for all sanctioned NCS Qualifying Competitions. The CMS will provide evidence of the number of NCS Qualifying Matches each player has played. Full rosters must be entered, including replacement players who entered the match. If the NCS Qualifying Match is not entered into CMS, it will not apply toward the club or player participation minimum.

**NOTE:** If there is a forfeit for an NCS Qualifying Match, and the non-forfeiting team enters the full roster and locks the match by the 48-hour deadline, then the match shall apply towards the non-forfeiting team's player's participation record using that full roster. Players not on the full match roster may not use this game to support a waiver.

##### **3.4.3. Player Eligibility: Recognized Competitive Match.**

A recognized competitive match may count as a Qualifying Match with respect to player eligibility, under the following circumstances:

1. The club has qualified, or is still in contention, for the USA Club Rugby NCS.
2. The Approved Governing Body must receive written approval from the Senior Club 15s Competitions Committee for the match to count as a Qualifying match with respect to player eligibility.
3. No more than one (1) competitive match for any NCS-bound club will be approved by the Senior Club Competitions Committee.
4. The approved competitive match does not apply towards the club's match participation requirement; it only applies towards a player's eligibility requirement.

5. The club must request approval from the Senior Club Competitions Committee for the competitive match to be used for player eligibility purposes no later than April 1.
6. The approved competitive match must be entered into the CMS no later than 48 hours after the match has concluded. If the match is not entered into the CMS and locked within the stated timeline, it will not be considered for player eligibility purposes.
7. Each player must have registered to the NCS-bound club prior to the deadline (See 3.4.2-(a)).
8. The Senior Club Competitions and Eligibility Committees shall review the roster used in the approved competitive match to ensure that the club and players are operating within the Spirit of the Rules.
9. The approved competitive match must be played with a sanctioned senior club, with all players registered and in good standing with USA Rugby. All players on the NCS-bound club playing the game as a Qualifying match must be registered to the club.

If a club is suspected of bad-faith action, the competitive match may not count toward any player's match participation requirements.

No player has an automatic right to count a competitive match towards their NCS match participation requirement. Players that fail to meet the match participation minimum may request a waiver from USA Rugby (See 7.5.2).

### **3.6. Women's Premier League (WPL). — ADDED.**

Confirms:

- Divisional eligibility guidelines, with respect to lower division play, applies only to the WPL's Fall 2023 segment (August-October).
- Divisional eligibility standards with a lower (D1/D2) team, are the same as found in Section 3.5 (Senior Clubs Fielding Multiple Sides).
- The WPL semifinal/final competition is part of the NCS; players in those games are not eligible to play in NCS pathway matches in a lower division team.

### **7.5.2. Waivers.**

#### **E. In-Season Transfer for Rugby-Related Reasons (Fifteens Only).**

Players requesting an in-season transfer in order to join a different senior club must initiate the transfer prior to the membership registration deadline (see Section 3.4-(a)).

Each request must include:

- i. Confirmation of playing in no more than two (2) NCS Qualifying Matches with the home club, and
- ii. Release from the home club confirming no outstanding disciplinary or financial issues, and
- iii. Approval of the local union and confirmation of no outstanding disciplinary or financial issues.

The timing of the request (matches played, player's history with the club, standing and remaining schedule of the home club, standing and remaining schedule of the new club)-will be considered should the player require a waiver from USA Rugby for eligibility in the NCS.

**NOTE:** This is a one-time exception; the player may not transfer 'back' to the home club with NCS eligibility during the same competitive season.

### **7.6.3. Senior Club Council Appellate Panel: Review of National Eligibility/Competitions Committee Decision.**

A player or club has the right to Appeal an eligibility decision of the Senior Club Eligibility or Competitions Committee. To request a review, all explanation and relevant data must be submitted to the the Senior Club Council Review Panel ([seniorclubeligibility@usa.rugby](mailto:seniorclubeligibility@usa.rugby)). This review will be based on the procedure used in the decision of the Senior Club Committee.

This request must be submitted within five (5) days of the decision by the Senior Club Committee, but not less than five (5) business days prior to an NCS Qualifying Match/Tournament or USA Club Rugby Championship Event for which eligibility has been requested.

Players requesting an Appeal of a National Eligibility/Competitions Committee decision must receive approval of the Appeal BEFORE participating in any NCS Match or Event. Requesting an Appeal from the Senior Club Council does not provide temporary eligibility. The formal approval of the Appeal from the Senior Club Council must be received before the player may play for his/her Club.

Matches at the NCS will not be played if any player is not confirmed as eligible for the Event by USA Rugby.

There shall be no Appeal during an NCS Championship Event.

There is a fee associated with the Appeal: \$100 if by the player, \$300 if by the club. This fee shall be returned if the Appeal is successful. To submit the fee, use the USA Club Rugby Association [Venmo profile](#).

The Panel will have up to five (5) days from date of receipt of all required documentation to respond to the applicant.

There shall be no waivers to this timeline.

A Member may file a Grievance with the USA Rugby Disciplinary and Grievance Committee to review whether there has been a civil rights violation claim.