

READING BERKS JUNIOR SOCCER LEAGUE

AGE GROUP AND DIVISIONAL ALIGNMENT (RELEGATION)



Effective 12 Apr 2023

1. Team registration

Each Club must register their teams in each age division with RBJSL by published deadlines. The deadlines are subject to change, but traditionally are:

- For the spring season, the Friday prior to the federal Martin Luther King holiday.
- For the fall season, the second Wednesday of July.

2. Age divisions

2.1.Tiers

Depending on the number of registered teams in each age division, RBJSL offers up to 3 tiers of competition, with Tier 1 the most competitive.

- U9/U10 (7v7) – 3 tiers: Tier 1 (T1), Tier 2 (T2), and Tier 3 (T3)
- U11/U12 (9v9) – 2 tiers: Tier 1 (T1) and Tier 2 (T2)
- U13 and up (11v11) – up to 2 tiers: Tier 1 (T1) and Tier 2 (T2)

Playoffs are conducted at the conclusion of the fall season for Tier 1 only. Refer to the RBJSL Playoff Rules of Competition for additional information.

2.2.Tier requirements

Each tier must have a minimum of 4 teams.

- It is preferred to have 5 or more teams, representing 4 or more different clubs.
- It may be necessary to combine teams to create a viable tier. Refer to Section 4 for additional information. Examples:
 - Move teams up: Combine U9 T1 and U10 T2 to form a larger U10 T2.
 - Consolidate tiers: Combine U12 T1 and U12 T2 to form a larger U12 T1.
- NOTE: A proposed 3-team tier requires EPYSA approval. Teams playing in 3-team tiers may be ineligible for EPYSA competitions (e. g., Cups).

If a tier has 14 or more teams, the tier may be split into two evenly distributed flights. The flights can be based on geography (to reduce travel) or based on anticipated skill level (e. g., flight A and flight B).

3. Club placement of teams

In order to promote fair play and encourage clubs/teams to challenge their players, RBJSL strongly discourages clubs from placing their teams in lower tiers solely for the purpose of winning games. RBJSL has established the following relegation guidelines to encourage and, where necessary, enforce this philosophy.

3.1. Performance-based placement

Performance-based placement is used for both the fall and spring seasons. It applies to returning teams at all age groups, in which more than one tier is offered.

If ALL of the following criteria are met, the team MUST move up to the next higher tier.

- The team played in T2 or T3 in the previous season.
- The team won 70% of their games in the previous season.
- The team's goals-against average was 1.5 goals or fewer in the previous season.
- 50% or more of the players from the previous fall season are returning (regardless of primary or secondary).

If some, but not all, of the above criteria are met, the team is expected to consider moving up to the next higher tier.

A team that "runs up the score" (i. e., a team that wins RBJSL league games by more than 5 goals) demonstrates that they are ready to move up to the next higher tier in the subsequent season.

RBJSL reserves the right to require a returning team to move up to the next higher tier, based on the specific circumstances of that team's makeup and performance.

NOTE: If the team played in T1 during the previous season, the team is encouraged to consider moving up to the next age division.

Returning teams are not permitted to drop two tiers (e. g., 10U T1 to 10U T3).

3.2. Multiple teams in an age division

If a Club enters multiple teams in the same age division, the Club is expected to place the teams in multiple tiers (i. e., to not place all of the teams in the lowest tier). Clubs are expected to group their players by ability in order to conform to this requirement.

4. RBJSL relegation meeting

Age divisions and tiers are finalized at the RBJSL relegation meeting.

- If an age division/tier combination has fewer than the required number of teams, the teams will be moved up a tier (e. g., T2 to T1).
- If a T1 group has fewer than the required number of teams:
 - The teams will normally be moved up an age division, and be permitted to play in any tier (e. g., from U11 T1 to U12 T2 or T1).

- Alternately, the teams may be combined with the T2 teams in that age division (especially for U10 and U12, where moving up would result in a roster increase).
- If an age division/tier combination has fewer than the required number of teams, and the next higher age division/tier combination is not available, the teams may be permitted to drop one tier (e. g., T1 to T2).
- Any other solutions are at the discretion of the RBJSL Executive Board.