

Senior Club Regulations. Summary of Key Changes for 2026-27.

Section 1. Terms and Definitions.

12. Competition Management System (CMS).

Added: errors in roster submissions are the responsibility of the local union, club, and individual to fix within 48 hours of the match (suggested timeline).

21. Forfeit.

Added as a definition for clarification purposes.

43. Recognized Competitive Match.

Revised to require approval in advance by the 15s competitions committee.

62. Transfer.

Added: this is a two-step process; if any issues or delays, the player must contact their former club/local union to resolve.

Section 2. General Eligibility Regulations.

2.5-(b). Transgender Athletes: Confirms all questions to go to USAR Compliance.

2.6. Rugby and Gender: Confirms all questions to go to USAR Compliance.

2.8. Anti-Doping Policy: Confirms all questions to go to USAR Compliance.

Section 3. Senior Club Fifteens Regulations.

3.2. Club Eligibility: NCS Qualifying Matches.

-(a)(i). Clubs must participate in a competition which includes at least four NCS-pathway clubs belonging to the same Approved Governing Body. This includes Hybrid leagues. Clubs must declare their division to the fifteens committee prior to the start of the competition. Exceptions must be approved in advance by the fifteens committee.

-(a)(iv). Clubs advancing to the NCS may not have forfeited an NCS Qualifying match.

-(a)(v). Clubs advancing to the NCS may not use more than one unplayed match (forfeit by the opponent) to meet the NCS club participation requirement. Exceptions must be appealed to the 15s committee.

-(a)(vii). Timeline for CMS recording: rosters, substitutes, match details. This is a suggestion but may be referenced in event of non-compliance by clubs advancing to the NCS. SCC administrators will conduct random checks to ensure compliance, notify local unions where clubs are falling short. Failure to comply after multiple notifications will be shared with the SCC for potential sanctions. This is the fifth year of using RX CMS, no excuses for failure to comply.

3.2-(c). The Approved Governing Body regulations must be current, should be published online and include the guidelines listed below (in this section).

3.2-(i). Player profiles must be set to public (SCC policy). SCC administrators will conduct random checks to confirm compliance, players may be subject to sanction for failure to comply after repeat notifications.

3.3. Club Eligibility: NCS.

3.3-(c). CMS. CMS is to be used at all NCS events; match data/rosters entered by the timeline specified by the NCS event director.

3.3-(d). NCS Rosters. Confirms the number of non-residents and professional players is not doubled for NCS Event Rosters. NCS Qualifying match and NCS Event roster limits (professionals, NRs) is the same.

3.3-(g). Self-Compliance. Suggest clubs routinely monitor NCS eligibility of all members over course of the season.

3.4. Player Eligibility: NCS Qualifying Matches.

(e). Two-step transfer process explained, a transfer in RX does not automatically mean the player is immediately eligible for the new club.

3.4.1. Player Eligibility: Approved Governing Body Playoffs.

- (e). Players must be registered on a full-year basis (not weekly) and meet the registration deadline.
- (h). On participation in any local union playoffs, the player's NCS eligibility is locked to that club (waivers may be approved for documented and specific situations).

3.4.2. Player Eligibility: USA Club Rugby NCS.

- (f). Clubs fielding more than one team in the NCS: player movement between NCS rosters is permitted on separate weekend/events when (1) the player was part of the lower division team (starter or replacement) and that team was eliminated; and, (2) if the player was part of the club's upper or lower division 'up to 28' player Event roster but did not play.

3.4.3. Recognized Competitive Match.

- (b). Reg 3.4.3 matches are the only non-NCS Qualifying matches to apply towards player eligibility, must be approved in advance by the 15s competitions committee.
- (c). Increased number of Reg 3.4.3. matches a club may schedule; players may only use one for NCS eligibility purposes. Goal: encourage clubs to play more competitive matches.
- (e). Reg 3.4.3 matches are for player eligibility; clubs may appeal the 15s committee to approve for club participation minimum as well.
- (f). Must be requested at least ten calendar days before proposed match, no later than April 1.
- (g). Must be played by April 15.
- (h). Forfeited Reg 3.4.3. match will not be counted; match must be played.

3.5.2. Player Eligibility: Senior Clubs Fielding Multiple Teams.

3.5.2. USA Club Rugby NCS Matches. (*repeats 3.4.2-(f) noted above*)

- (c). Clubs fielding more than one team in the NCS; player movement between NCS rosters is permitted on separate weekend/events when (1) the player was part of the lower division team (starter or replacement) and that team was eliminated; and, (2) if the player was part of the club's upper or lower division 'up to 28' player Event roster but did not play.

3.7. Professional Rugby.

Update how clubs can confirm professional player status: send inquiry to the eligibility committee, also current and most previous year MLR list of players maintained on USA Club Rugby website (resources).

3.8. Senior Club Player Waivers.

The two categories for missed match participation will require club administrator approval. Due to a higher than usual/typical number of requests on this basis received this year, there will be a limit of ten (10)/club; it is up to the club to also track their requests.

7. General Procedures.

7.4. Player Documentation.

Players may use their current or expired US Passport / US Passport Card for Resident/Citizenship verification.

7.5.1. Waiver Request Process.

Expedited Request.

\$50 non-refundable fee for any waiver requested within five business days of an NCS competition for which eligibility is requested.

7.5.2. Senior Club Eligibility Waivers.

Waiver requests of the two match participation category are limited to ten/club; this includes approvals and denials. All requests of this category must be submitted by the club administrator.

7.5.2.A. In-Season Transfer due to Geographic Relocation: Non-Rugby Reasons.

On playing in a local union playoff match with any club, the player's NCS eligibility is locked to that club. Exceptions may be approved on documentation of extraordinary circumstances.

7.5.2.B. Missed Match Participation: Medical/Personal Hardship.

- ii. Added criteria for requests made on basis of mental health.
- v. Added criteria for player to have played in at least one NCS Qualifying match (conference or a Reg 3.4.3 match but not a forfeited match). Exceptions may be approved on documentation of extraordinary circumstances.

7.5.2.E. In-Season Transfer: Rugby-Related Reasons (Fifteens only).

- i. Increased limit from two (2) to three (3) NCS Qualifying matches with the home club.
- ii. not applicable if player played in any local union playoffs with the home club.

Note added that the player must meet all eligibility criteria with the new club to be NCS eligible.

Any questions please contact the Senior Club Eligibility Committee: eligibility@usaclub.rugby