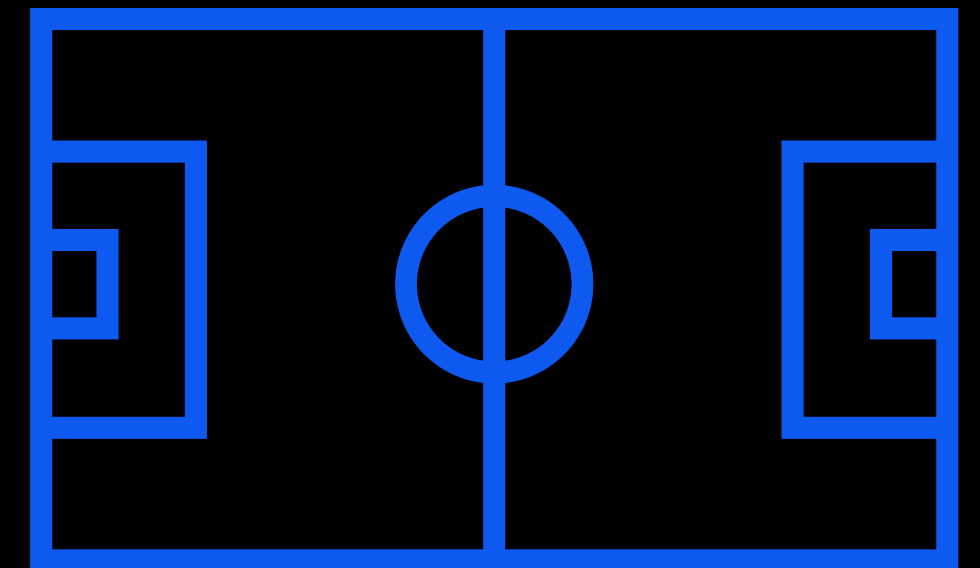




One Club
One Culture
One Direction

PARENT HANDBOOK

***Unlocking potential and fostering inclusivity –
empowering every child through soccer***



FCCI Directors



Director of Coaching- Tristan Alvarez

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Assistant Director of Coaching (Boys) -
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Assistant Director of Coaching (Girls)-
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Director of Operations - Natalie Freeman

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Sporting Director- Mike Matkovich

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Introduction



"Unlocking potential and fostering inclusivity - empowering every child through soccer.": This mission statement embodies our commitment to developing individual athletes throughout their lives. Success transcends the field; it is about more than winning games. Our focus extends to fostering the long-term success of our players as individuals. We aim to cultivate self-confidence, passion for the game, accountability, inclusivity, and sportsmanship. These values are foundational for developing soccer skills. Each victory and defeat is an opportunity to learn and grow.

Creating and maintaining positive environments during training sessions and games is crucial for player development and personal growth. Enjoyment of the game and the acquisition of new skills are key to keeping children engaged in youth sports. Our coaches are responsible for instilling these principles within our teams. Any form of yelling or berating directed at players, officials, opposing coaches, or parents is not acceptable. Our coaches transcend their role on the field; they are an educator shaping not just athletes but individuals.

We are delighted to have you and your child as part of our soccer family. This handbook serves as a comprehensive guide to help you navigate your journey with us, providing valuable information about our club, policies, procedures, and expectations. Whether you are a seasoned soccer parent or new to the game, this handbook is designed to answer your questions, address your concerns.

Financial Assistance



FC Central Illinois is proud to offer scholarships to those families with a demonstrated financial need. Information on applying for financial assistance through our scholarship program can be found at <https://www.fccentralillinois.com/scholarships>.

Please note that scholarship awards do not cover fees for additional tournaments, any travel expenses, costs of uniforms and equipment, camps, and/or other team/club related expenses.

To submit a scholarship application, the completed application and supporting documentation must be received at our office or via email to finance@fccentralillinois.com within 1 week after receiving the offer for your team. Applications received after this date and/or those submitted without the required documentation could be denied.

Refund Policy



A commitment to play for FC Central Illinois is for the entire soccer year. For high school aged players, the entire soccer year means either the fall or spring season. For all other players, the entire soccer year means both the fall and spring seasons. Any alternative commitment arrangements (e.g. - non-high school aged player playing only the fall or spring season) must have been discussed with the Director of Coaching and agreed to in advance.

All financial commitments as outlined in the player fees document must be fulfilled in full in order for a player to be released to another club/team. If all financial commitments are not met and FC Central Illinois is obligated to file in small claims court, the player/parent would be responsible for any legal fees and expenses incurred by FC Central Illinois.

No refunds, partial or full, will be issued for any Travel or Training player who chooses to not participate for any reason at any point after the commitment is made or who is suspended or removed from FC Central Illinois.

The Finance Committee, at their sole discretion, may choose to issue a partial or full refund or credit in situations involving season ending injuries, relocations more than fifty (50) miles, or other circumstances as deemed appropriate.

Refund requests must be submitted in writing to the Finance Committee at finance@fccentralillinois.com and must include appropriate documentation, such as doctor written medical absence or proof of relocation. Refund requests for fall season fees must be received no later than November 1st of the same calendar year. Refund requests for spring season fees must be received no later than June 1st of the same calendar year.

Note that if a season is canceled in part or in full due to COVID-19 or other similar situation, we will assess each team's (and potentially each player's) situation and credit accounts for that portion of the season we were unable to provide, after considering our fixed costs and any non-recoverable costs (such as not getting all our money back on tournaments we registered and paid for).

Under no circumstances will the initial commitment fee be refunded.

Delinquent Player Accounts



- Players with past-due balances from previous seasons are ineligible to register for the current year's season.
- Past-due reminders are automatically sent out after a missed payment. Suspension occurs after no payment is received within 7 days of the due date.
- Players with past-due fees will be suspended. Suspensions will be reported to each coach and team manager weekly who will notify families immediately.
- Players whose accounts are delinquent are suspended and inactive will **NOT** be allowed to participate in any games (scrimmages, league matches, tournaments, etc.). Players may **NOT** attend training, Friday skills, GK training sessions, or any other club activity.
- Player cards for delinquent members will be held by the Club until all financial obligations are met, then player restrictions will be lifted.

Team Communication



We provide each team with a TeamSnap account to ensure effective communication. This platform is intended for sharing information and is not a social forum for parents. By participating, parents acknowledge their understanding the following conditions:

- **Using inappropriate language or behavior**: Parents should refrain from using offensive language or engaging in disrespectful behavior towards coaches, other parents, or players in team communications.
- **Publicly criticizing coaches or players**: Criticizing coaches or players in public team communication channels can create tension and disrupt team morale. Parents should address concerns privately with the coach or team management instead of airing issues publicly.
- **Ignoring important announcements or updates**: Parents should make sure to regularly check team communications for important announcements, schedule changes, or other updates to stay informed and engaged with the team.

These communication streams are intended for sharing information and are not intended as a parent social platform. **It is not provided** to air grievances, or negative comments about the coach, team, and/or club. These issues should be communicated as previously outlined. Parents who use this platform other than the intended use will be removed.

Club Communication and Protocols



We encourage an open-door communication policy between parents, players, coaches, and our directors. Should you have any questions or concerns about your child or your team we ask that you follow the protocol below to address the issue:

48-Hour Rule: If you are upset about an incident that has occurred during a game or practice, do not approach your coach on the field immediately following the incident. Please allow 48 hours before contacting the coach to discuss the issue. After 48 hours have past, please address the issue through the following channels:

- 1) Discuss the issue with the head coach. If not resolved...
- 2) Discuss the issue with the appropriate Assistant Director of Coaching. If not resolved...
- 3) Discuss the issue with the Director of Coaching, Tristan Alvarez. If not resolved...
- 4) Discuss the issue with the Sporting Director, Mike Matkovich.

Should you need to speak with a director, email them to set up a time to discuss the issue.

***ALL players and parents should adhere to a 48-hour post-incident, “cooling off period,” before initiating any discussion.**

Parent Code of Conduct



Parents play a critical role in all facets of their child's development. You are not only a supporter of your son/daughter, but also a role model. Your actions reflect upon the player, the team, and the club and we have **zero tolerance** for parents who behave otherwise. At FC Central Illinois, we expect you to support your child's interest in the game in a manner that supports the spirit of sport and fair play.

Parents agree to abide by the following requirements:

- Seating for observation of practices is restricted to the outer periphery of the fields. Parents are not allowed on the training pitch. Parents are restricted from the field of play and absolutely cannot be on the perimeter of the team's designated area.
- ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOL, SMOKING, PROFANITY, OR FIGHTING (will result in automatic suspensions/bans).
- Players attend all possible team functions (practices, games, meetings, club events, etc.) Please encourage and support your son/daughter in meeting his/her obligations.
- Set an example by your conduct and good sportsmanship.
- Allow the coach to direct the play of the game.
- **No coaching from the sidelines**: Let the coaches coach. Do not instruct or berate your child or anyone else's child at any time during games or practices. Anything you say should be positive and non-instructional.

Parent Code of Conduct



- Follow the rules established by your team and the club.
- Represent the club well in the community: By enrolling your player in our club, as a parent you are also committing to the program and are expected to represent the club in a positive light on and off the field. The club reserves the right to remove families from the club who do not comply with club expectations.
- Respect opposing coaches, players, and parents: We expect FCCI parents to do their part to de-escalate tense situations on the field by remaining in control of their actions, words, and emotions.

Parents violating the above rules will be subject to suspension and removal in addition to actions taken by governing bodies. In addition, the following conduct will result in automatic suspension and club review:

Respect Referees: Under NO circumstances should parents ever berate or shout at referees

Sent off by the referee - minimum 2-game suspension

Entering the field of play - minimum 6-month suspension

Antagonizing opponent players and/or parents - minimum 3-game suspension

Player Expectations



We hold our players to a standard of conduct and expect them to represent the club in a positive light both on and off the soccer field. Playing competitive sports is a privilege and should be treated as such. As a member of FC Central Illinois players are expected to adhere to the following standards:

- Attend all games and practices and arrive on time.
- Abide by all team rules and standards set forth by the coach and the Club.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude and focused effort toward individual player development.
- Be respectful of coaches, teammates, parents, referees, and opponents.
- Always exhibit good sportsmanship.
- Wear an FCCI training jersey/kit to all practices and games.
- Consult your coach before guest playing or training with other teams.
- Players are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their development. The club recommends that inquiries regarding playing time and position be initially addressed by the player to the coach in a constructive manner. If a player feels dissatisfied with their playing time, they are advised to establish a conversation with the coach.

Guest Playing



At the FC Central Illinois, players have the opportunity to guest play across our club partners, comprising of:

- Peoria FC United (PFCU)
- Springfield Area Soccer Association (SASA)

In exceptional cases, prior authorization is required for guest playing with clubs beyond the Central Illinois United partnership. Such approval must be obtained from either the Director of Coaching or the Director of Operations. ***Approval from coaches is not permitted.***

Playing Time



Our Philosophy on playing time:

- Prioritize player development, teamwork, and competition.
- Create a competitive environment that encourages dedication and skill enhancement.

Playing Time Allocation:

- Playing time may NOT be equal for all players but players will play in a game they attend. How much time is dependent on the factors below.

Factors Influencing Playing Time:

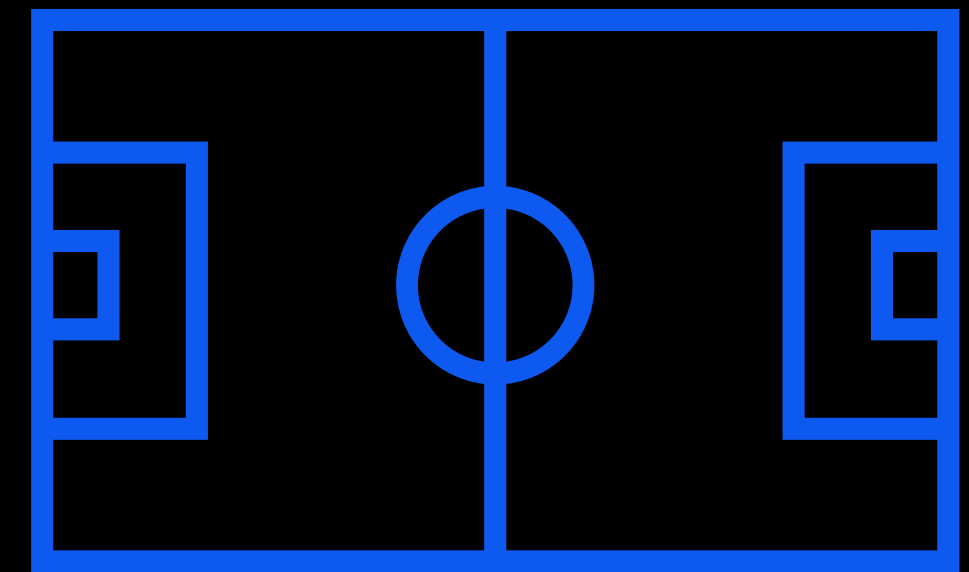
- **Skill Level:** Players who have demonstrated advanced skills and or who are following coaching instructions may have increased opportunities to contribute on the field.
- **Commitment:** Attendance, punctuality, and dedication matter.
- **Team Dynamics:** Consideration of each player's strengths and abilities.

Weekend Playing Percentage:

- Players can expect varying percentages based on strategy, opponent strength, and performance.
- Players at FCCI, should receive at least:
 - U8-U13: 50% of playing time over a tournament and league WEEKEND.
 - U14-U19: 33% of playing time over a tournament and league WEEKEND.

Communication Channels:

- Open communication with coaching staff regarding playing time.
- Encouraged discussion of questions or concerns.



Evaluations and Surveys



Club/Team Survey:

During the December break and the end of each season, the club asks parents to participate in a club/team Survey. The sources of input are Anonymous, and we encourage parents to participate. It is a critical way for our club to help improve our coaching staff, operations, and overall club experience. This will allow our directors to analyze the satisfaction of players and parents with their experiences.

Player Evaluations:

December: In person evaluations (Player + Parent(s) + Coach)

May/June: Written evaluation with comments

The player evaluation is formal communication between the player, parents, and the coach. The club provides our coaches with templates and guidelines to follow. As with most communications, each coach may approach this differently. These evaluations serve an important role in the development process. It also serves as a formal opportunity for players and parents to discuss openly any aspect of their player's development. This is a two-way street, and the player needs to take responsibility for knowing their status and what areas of development they need to concentrate their efforts on. What the coach expects of your player going forward. Parents and players understand a coach can guide a player but the greater the player's aspirations, the greater the individual effort needs to be.

The goal of these evaluations is to ensure both the player and parent are aware of the coach's assessment and should serve as a roadmap for player focus and improvement.

Volunteer Hours



- Every family has the option to serve two (2) volunteer hours for each child playing on FC Central Illinois teams, up to a maximum of four (4) hours per seasonal year.
- Families can also “opt out” of volunteering and pay \$100 per child per seasonal year up to a maximum of \$200 per family.
- Volunteer hours not completely fulfilled by May 31 will result in a charge to your account of \$50 per volunteer hour not completed.
- If you are wanting to opt out of your volunteer hours, please email, Natalie Freeman, Director of Operations, natalie.freeman@fccentralillinois.com to set this up.

Team Managers



Once a team is formed, the coach will ask a parent or guardian to volunteer as the team manager. This person will be the main link between parents and the coach. The team managers will be added to a TeamSnap group titled, "FC Managers", in this chat team managers will be notified by club directors about cancellations, changes or events.

Responsibilities of team managers are the following:

- Communication of cancellations and changes to games and practices to parents.
- Update TeamSnap calendar with games, practices, tournaments and friendlies as early as possible.
- Constant communication with coaching staff about team needs and communication.
- Checking player availability for games.
- Requesting hotel blocks for overnight tournaments. (This is done on tournament websites, under "housing")
- A Team manager will check the team in at tournaments (NOT all tournaments require)
- Collect any fees from parents for optional events.

*****Although not mandatory, some team managers enjoy arranging extra activities like team dinners and team bonding events outside of soccer. While not required by FCCL, we welcome and appreciate these efforts*****