



**ONTARIO  
SOCCER.**

EST. 1901

**ONTARIO SOCCER**  
7601 Martin Grove Road, Vaughan ON, L4L 9E4  
905.264.9390 ontariosoccer.net

Proud Member of



Play.  
Inspire.  
Unite.

**Bulletin #:** I2025-05

**Date:** February 20, 2025

**To:** Ontario Soccer, District Membership and Associate Members

**CC:** Ontario Soccer; Board of Directors, Staff

**From:** Matt Ferreira, Director, Development

**Subject:** New Canada Soccer Grassroots Standards for Mandatory Implementation

Ontario Soccer is excited to announce the launch of Canada Soccer's new Grassroots Standards, which have been developed, after extensive nationwide consultation with its Member Association Technical Leads, to enhance the quality and delivery of soccer programming for all participants at the grassroots level (Under-13 and younger).

These standards represent a significant milestone in Canada Soccer's continued commitment to fostering an inclusive, fun, and developmentally appropriate environment for young players, which began with the advent of [Canada Sport for Life's Long-Term Development](#) framework in 2007 and Ontario Soccer's mandatory implementation beginning in 2012.

The standards, with the goal of enhancing the overall soccer experience for all, focus on the following Guiding Principles:


1. Grassroots Programs should be appropriately structured for the age and stage of the participating players and allow for the opportunity for multi-sport participation, activity sampling, and life balance.
2. Grassroots Matches should be played on fields, with goals and balls, and following a match day format that is developmentally appropriate for the participating players.
3. Coaches have the greatest impact on the experience of players and every child deserves a properly qualified coach.
4. Children register to play soccer, not to watch others play or spend time traveling. Teams should strive for fair playing time and limit travel time as much as possible.
5. Talent Identification and selection should be delayed as long as possible to provide as many players as possible with the best training environment available.
6. Match results should not be the focus of grassroots soccer as this restricts player development and negatively impacts the player experience.



**ONTARIO  
SOCCER.**

EST. 1901

**ONTARIO SOCCER**  
7601 Martin Grove Road, Vaughan ON, L4L 9E4  
905.264.9390 ontariosoccer.net

Proud Member of 

Play.  
Inspire.  
Unite.

This cohesive framework, being implemented coast-to-coast-to-coast, ensures all soccer stakeholders will have a consistent and supportive environment for all players. Ontario Soccer is committed to supporting these values and promoting the growth of soccer across the province.

The most significant change, relative to the currently implemented and recommended [Ontario Soccer Grassroots Standards](#), is the exclusive playing format for Under-13 as 9v9, as well as the allowance of introduction of tournament play at that age group. Ontario Soccer has yet to define how tournaments will be introduced in the province for Under-13 and stakeholder consultation will occur in the coming months to define an appropriate strategy.

After consultation with both the Technical Advisory Committee and Voting Members Council regarding the official mandated date nationwide targeting 2026, Ontario Soccer has decided to align to the playing formats and all other requirements by the **Indoor 2025/26 Season**. This will ensure players can make the transition smoothly with limited disruptions between playing seasons and provide Clubs and Leagues with sufficient time to plan and adapt accordingly.

To support the rollout and implementation, Ontario Soccer will be working with Canada Soccer on several different elements such as:

- Hosting Informational Webinars;
- Schedule townhalls, in collaboration with District Associations. in either a virtual or in-person format;
- Update existing and launch new Grassroots Resources;

As we move closer to the official rollout of these standards, Ontario Soccer encourages all stakeholders to familiarize yourselves with the upcoming changes, participate in available sessions, and actively engage with the resources provided by both Canada Soccer and Ontario Soccer.

For more information, please visit the Canada Soccer website at [Canada Soccer - Grassroots Standards](#) or the Ontario Soccer website at [Ontario Soccer – Grassroots Resources](#).

Together, let's embrace the positive changes ahead and continue to build a strong foundation for the future of soccer in Ontario.

For any questions on the Grassroots Standards and their implementation in Ontario, please reach out [Matt Ferreira, Director, Development](#).

