



NCSL Spring 2020 Update **May 25, 2020**

To the NCSL Community:

On this beautiful Memorial Day, we hope you are taking the time with your families to reflect on the sacrifices that our nation's veterans have made for this country. Although in quarantine we have been uniquely focused on the burdens we all must carry for our fellow neighbor, we should all be reminded of the heroism of those who came before us and who laid down their lives for our freedom.

On behalf of the NCSL Executive Committee, I write today to share publicly with all of you the information that we provided to our member clubs last week: NCSL has determined that returning to competition this Spring is not feasible and has announced the cancelation of the Spring 2020 season in its entirety.

As we wrote in our prior updates, this decision is not our own to make. We are obliged to follow the requirements of our various jurisdictions, including those who manage the fields on which our teams play. The National Capital region remains on various degrees of lockdown, and none of our jurisdictions have signaled a return to organized youth sports competitions in the near future. We have previously predicted that a return to play is not likely perhaps before July, and nothing we have seen has caused us to rethink that expectation.

Over the past month, we consulted with all of our member clubs as to various alternatives we developed, that included small-sided summer league play or a shortened Spring term to be played in mid-to-late summer. But ultimately, we were urged by a majority to simply cancel the Spring competition and look forward to the Fall, when fields will hopefully be made available and protocols for active competition can be implemented.

Accordingly, we are now turning our attention to the return to play, and most importantly, for a fun, safe, and successful Fall 2020 competition. And there are several reasons to be excited to do so.

First, the [USYS League Championship Series](#) will officially kick-off in the Fall for our Super Group teams. NCSL is proud to have been selected as one of only four leagues in the country that will participate in the League Championships, which offers a direct pathway straight from NCSL into the USYS National Championship competition. Winners of our Super Group divisions will represent NCSL in a premier event next May against the winners of three other top leagues. Each champion will then earn an automatic berth in the USYS Regional Championships and the right to compete for a spot in the USYS

National Championships. Our Super Group winners in the Fall 2020 season will compete against our Spring winners for the right to represent NCSL in that inaugural championship event.

Second, the NCSL in the Fall 2020 will be like none other ever experienced. As the world adjusts to COVID-19, we will adjust with it, opening the league up to more flexible options for play that recognize that soccer must adapt to the changing realities of our world. Each club member of NCSL will be participating in shaping those rules to make sure that you and your son or daughter can enjoy coming back to organized youth soccer activities again.

Third, we will be working directly with the leaders of our member clubs to ensure that we can provide the very best competitive environments for our players, while limiting travel to the greatest extent possible. In the event that a club chooses to remake its team roster, we will work with the club's leadership to understand the best divisional placement for that new team. And where travel should be minimized, we will take that into consideration as well, leading to a better environment for our new and returning families.

Not that everything happening in NCSL is occurring on the pitch. We once again invite you to follow us online, where we have amassed an impressive collection of virtual content, including professional player spotlights, stay-at-home how-to videos, college recruiting updates, and coaching forums with APFC, an elite Catalan coaching academy founded by former FC Barcelona Academy Director Albert Puig. To follow us on social media, make sure to subscribe to us on YouTube ([NCSL Social Media](#)) and follow us on Twitter ([@NCSL2](#)) and Instagram ([NCSL2](#)).

Again, we continue to be impressed by the leadership of our member clubs within their communities. We look forward to seeing you on the pitch as soon as possible.

Richard Smith
President, National Capital Soccer League