

## **Plum Area Youth Soccer Single Age Group Policy**

Plum Area Youth Soccer (PAYS) is committed to placing players in the environment that best supports their safety, long-term development, and overall success. As a standard policy, players are expected to compete within their designated age group, with exceptions granted only in limited circumstances. In accordance with U.S. Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) guidelines, age-group placement will be determined using the [Age Group Matrix outlined in Appendix A](#). This matrix reflects the transition from birth-year registration to school-year registration, a change intended to allow players to participate alongside their classmates and peers.

The goal of this policy is to give coaches access to the strongest possible pool of players within each school-year age group so they can form teams with comparable skill levels and mental maturity. PAYS aims to build the highest-level teams across all age groups while remaining aligned with the school-year registration model.

Requests to “play up” will be considered only when there is clear, documented evidence that remaining in the appropriate age group would substantially limit a player’s development.

### **PLAY UP POLICY:**

If a player requests permission to play up, they must submit the Play Up Request Form at the time of registration. A committee (the “Committee”) appointed by the PAYS President will review all relevant factors and determine the player’s eligibility.

Play-up evaluations will be conducted during tryouts or other scheduled assessment sessions, as determined by the Committee. Decisions will be based on the player’s demonstrated technical ability, tactical understanding, physical readiness, mental maturity, coachability, work ethic, and consistency of performance compared with the older age group.

A player requesting to play up, **MUST** attend at least 2 tryout days. It is highly recommended to attend ALL try-out days to allow for a more appropriate evaluation.

Approval to play up will be granted only in rare circumstances when a player clearly and consistently demonstrates the ability to compete safely and successfully at the higher level, as evidenced by being among the top three players in that age group.

If a play-up request is approved, dual rostering may be required. In those cases, the player’s age-appropriate team may remain the primary team for both practices and games.

The Committee’s decisions are final and are not subject to appeal.

*\*\*\* Plum Area Soccer reserves the right to amend or enhance this procedure. \*\*\**