USTA Southern California Junior Team Tennis Rules & Regulations

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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(Revised 8/18/26; subject to change by the USTA Southern California) Midseason rules can be implemented by the JTT Manager to adhere to the spirit of the rulebook.

1. Introduction & Governance

Section Regulations for Local League Areas

USTA Junior Team Tennis (JTT) is a team-based competition for boys and girls, providing opportunities to progress from local leagues to district and sectional. Participants must be 18 years of age or younger. Junior Team Tennis (JTT) is governed by the USTA Junior Team Tennis Regulations, including grievance procedures, which are established and updated by a committee appointed by the USTA President and follow processes approved by the USTA Board.

All Local Track Junior Team Tennis (JTT) league play is further governed by the USTA Net Generation Pathway Regulations and USTA SoCal Section Regulations, which emphasize fair and inclusive level-based competition. For guidance on National or State track regulations (i.e. start dates, team formats, etc.), participants should consult their Area League Coordinator (ALC). *(∗See Section 7 below "Resources & Contacts" for a list of current Area League Coordinators in Southern California.)*

Team Management, including coaches and captains, is responsible for understanding USTA Section Regulations and ensuring that players and parents adhere to all rules while participating in any Junior Team Tennis (JTT) competition. Assigned Area League Coordinators (ALCs) provide oversight in each established play area.

All resources and forms necessary to manage a season are available on the **Junior Team Tennis Providers page** of the USTA Southern California website.

Safe Play

As the national governing body for tennis in the United States, the USTA is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for young athletes. **Safe Play** is the USTA's comprehensive athlete safety program, governing appropriate behavior between adults and junior players. The USTA developed Safe Play policies, procedures, and educational resources in collaboration with the U.S. Center for SafeSport and the United States Olympic Committee.

Compliance with the requirements of Safe Play, including clearing USTA background screening and successfully completing Safe Play education is ***mandatory*** for all Junior Team Tennis (JTT) Team Coaches, Captains, Managers, and any players 18 years of age or older. This includes:

- Completing required Safe Play education.
- Passing background screening through the USTA.
- Renewing certifications as required.

To complete Safe Play, check your status, or renew certification, visit the **USTA Safe Play page**.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is the foundation of Junior Team Tennis (JTT). All Junior Team Tennis participants, including players, team management, parents, and spectators, are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct to foster a positive and respectful playing environment.

Good sportsmanship goes beyond following the rules. As outlined in *Friend at Court* **The Code 37**, sportsmanship means being fair, acting with character, respecting others, maintaining composure, and being accountable for one's actions. It also includes winning with humility, losing with grace, and giving others the benefit of the doubt. These values enrich the experience for everyone involved and help tennis remain a sport for life.

Unacceptable behavior will NOT be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to: arguing, cursing, unsportsmanlike conduct, derogatory comments between team management, parents, spectators, and players, or toward Area League Coordinators (ALCs). Prohibited behavior also includes sideline coaching, improper line calls by parents or spectators, and intentional incorrect calls by players.

Examples of poor sportsmanship also include refusal to shake hands following a match, name calling, and racquet abuse. Individuals who engage in such behavior may face suspension from the league and from USTA tournaments. For more information, consult the **Parent Support Guide** on sportsmanship in youth sports.

Sportsmanship also extends beyond match play. Respect for facilities is required at all times, including keeping courts and grounds clean, using equipment appropriately, and ensuring that nothing is damaged or removed.

As emphasized in *Friend at Court*, being a good sport is its own reward—both on and off the court. Sportsmanship builds trust, generates mutual respect, and promotes friendship among all people. By upholding these values, all Junior Team Tennis participants help create a safe, positive, and inclusive environment that demonstrates integrity and responsibility. For additional guidance, please refer to the **Friend at Court Code of Conduct**.

Grievances & Reporting

In the event of a sportsmanship, administrative, rating, or other grievance involving team management, players, or parents, a **Sportsmanship Grievance Form** must be submitted via **ustasocal.com** within 15 days of the incident by the team's coach only. Only the coach can access the Grievance Form via the Provider Portal located on the USTA SoCal Junior Team Tennis webpage. Complaints will be reviewed by Section Management and appropriate action will be taken. If necessary, the matter will be referred to the ***USTA SoCal Junior Competition Grievance Committee*** for further review.

Zero Tolerance

USTA Southern California is now enforcing a **Zero Tolerance Policy**. This is because we want to promote a safe and fun environment within the USTA and Junior Team Tennis. The policy states:

- Any parent reported to have interfered with a line calls by having direct or indirect communication with the opposing players

- Any behavior by a spectator deemed unacceptable towards a player, other spectator, or staff member

The above is subject to immediate removal from the player area, and if warranted, from the premises, for the remainder of the season.

The Entourage Rule

The **Entourage Rule** states: "Players are responsible for the conduct of those associated with them—including parents, coaches, and spectators. Unsportsmanlike behavior, whether in person or online, may result in code violations, penalties, or suspension points for the player."

Coach Sportsmanship Agreement

The Coach Sportsmanship Agreement must be signed and submitted to your Area League Coordinator before your first match of the season. A 100% return rate will be expected at the start of each season. Coaches can access, sign, and date the agreement via the **Coach Sportsmanship Agreement**.

Player/Parent Sportsmanship Agreement

The Player/Parent Sportsmanship Agreement must be signed and submitted to your Area League Coordinator prior to participating in your first match of the season. A 100% return rate is required at the start of each season to ensure all players understand and commit to upholding the highest standards of conduct. Players can access, sign, and date the form through the **Player/Parent Sportsmanship Agreement**.

Online / Social Media Expectations

All participants, including parents and players, are expected to maintain respectful behavior online.

Harassment, derogatory comments, or posting sensitive information about opponents, officials, or USTA staff on social media is strictly prohibited.

Violations, including unconsented picture or video posting, are taken with the utmost seriousness and may result in warnings, suspensions, or removal from Junior Team Tennis and/or Junior Tournaments.

Team Management Eligibility, Tools, & Organization

All coaches, captains, and managers must have a current ***USTA membership*** to manage teams and access **TennisLink**, and must comply with Safe Play requirements (see above).

Responsibilities of Team Management

- Maintain open and consistent communication with players and parents regarding schedules, lineups, and team information.
- Encourage parents and players to resolve questions internally before contacting the Area League Coordinator (ALC).

- Share preseason meeting materials, including match formats, sportsmanship expectations, and coaching guidelines.

Resources

A Junior Team Tennis Provider page is available on the USTA Southern California website. This landing page contains all forms, links, regulations, archived preseason meetings, and procedures needed to manage teams. Area League Coordinators (ALCs) provide ongoing support and access to resources throughout the season with current JTT Team Management. You can reach out to your ALC for the latest password to access this page.

Communication with Area League Coordinators (ALCs)

Area League Coordinators (ALCs) will maintain regular communication with USTA Southern California JTT Team Management to provide updates, reminders, and guidance on rule interpretations. For questions or concerns during the season, team management should contact their local Area League Coordinator (ALC) directly via email.

Parents should be encouraged to direct questions regarding player placement, sportsmanship, scoring, or scheduling internally to the team before contacting the Area League Coordinator (ALC).

2. Player Placement & Divisions

Player placement in Junior Team Tennis (JTT) is based on age, skill level, World Tennis Number (WTN) rating, and confidence level to ensure fair and competitive play. Team Management is responsible for placing players in the appropriate division, taking into account both their actual skill and confidence to compete at that level.

Player Divisions By Age & World Tennis Number (WTN) Levels

10 & Under Divisions

- **10 & Under Orange Ball (ages 7-9):** Matches are played on a 60’ court using the Net Generation PlayTracker system. Players earn “Play” points for participation. Orange Ball players can advance to Section Championships.
- **10 & Under Green Ball (ages 9-11):** Matches are played on a full-size court. Players must be Net Generation PlayTracker eligible, earning both “Win” and “Play” points. Eleven-year-olds playing green dot balls do not receive PlayTracker points, only WTN ratings.

12/14 & Under Divisions

- Gender-neutral divisions with Yellow Ball only.
- WTN ratings determine division placement:
    - **Level 1-5 (Open):** WTN 1-40
    - **Level 6 (Intermediate):** WTN 29-40
    - **Level 7 (Novice):** WTN 35–40

18 & Under Girls (Spring Season only due to CIF regulations)

- WTN ratings determine division placement:
    - **Level 1-5 (Open):** WTN 1-40

- **Level 6 (Intermediate):** WTN 29-40
- **Level 7 (Novice):** WTN 35–40

Level of Play

USTA Junior Team Tennis uses the **ITF World Tennis Number (WTN) rating system** to ensure players and teams are placed in the correct divisions.

The WTN is a free, global standard that measures a player's level of play regardless of age, gender, or ability. Each player receives one WTN for singles and one for doubles, with ratings updated weekly on Wednesdays. Beginner players typically start around 40, while professional players are closer to 1.

For more information on the WTN, visit the **USTA Southern California WTN page** or the **USTA national WTN page**.

To maintain fairness, if a player with a significantly stronger WTN competes in a weaker division, those matches will be recorded as defaults. However, the system also allows flexibility, as players with an inaccurately high WTN (for example, due to low confidence or limited match play) may register at the appropriate Intermediate or Novice level.

See 2026 WTN rating levels below.

World Tennis Number (WTN) Ratings

WTN is used to measure player ability regardless of age, gender, or experience. Ratings are updated weekly and determine division placement to ensure fairness and competitive balance. Players may play "up" in a higher-level division but may not play "down" below their appropriate WTN band, except in cases where a lower confidence level justifies an exception.

10-18U divisions only

- **10U:** Uses Net Generation PlayTracker and WTN
- 10U-18U Players:
  - **WTN 1-40: must play in the Advanced / Level 1-5 / Open Division**
    - This division is open to all players. The highest WTN determines the level of the team.
  - **WTN 29-40: play in the Intermediate / Level 6 Division**
    - Players are welcome to play "up" but those with a WTN lower than 31 must play in this division or up in the Level 1-5 division.
  - **WTN 35-40: play in the Novice / Level 7 division**
    - Players in this division must have a WTN between 36-40. They are welcome to play up in order to be on a team with friends. The highest WTN on the team determines the level for the whole team.

Note: Exceptions to these rating bands may be made for players with lower confidence ratings.

Confidence Levels

Players' confidence and skill level help determine the appropriate division for competition. Those with ***high confidence*** may compete with friends within one rating band, while those with ***medium confidence*** can play within two rating bands, or more if a coach can document with actual match results on their actual skill level. Players with ***low or zero confidence*** are eligible to play in any division.

Teams may also allow a player to move up to another division if they are within one WTN rating point of qualifying. For example, a player rated 35 who wishes to join friends in the Novice division may be permitted to do so.

Please review your players confidence level before adding to a team, based on the following:

- ***Blue check:*** Means player must play in the band
- ***Light blue check:*** Means ALCs can look at the players results and then see if the rating is legitimate. If ALC feels it is not, then they can allow that player to sign up for a level of their choosing while the system is open and closed to do so.
- ***Grey check:*** Means ALCs can allow that player to sign up for a level of their choosing while the system is open and closed to do so.

3. Team Formation & Registration

Team Creation & Player Registration

Team Management must complete *all eligibility requirements* before creating a Junior Team Tennis (JTT) team, including Safe Play compliance and active USTA membership. Once eligible, Team Management can access TennisLink to create and manage their team.

Becoming a Coach or Captain

Team Management selects ***"Become a Coach/Captain"*** under the ***"Junior Team Tennis"*** section in TennisLink. After completing this step, Team Management will be prompted to create a team by selecting the appropriate local league area, age division, and team name. Example format: ***14U Level 7 – Southbay AllStars – Wagner.***

Co-Captains must be listed on TennisLink during Team Registration if they will be coaching matches during the season. If more than 1 co-captain is used per team, coaches must be listed on the coach shared Google Sheet to verify Safe Play compliance.

Team Minimum Requirements

NEW STARTING SUMMER 2026:
Coaches must ensure that at least six players are registered and match-eligible for sectionals by the cutoff date (two weeks before the season ends). A one-player substitute rule remains in effect for excused absences, such as illness. However, teams that play the season with only five players

and attempt to add a sixth player from another team at the last minute will no longer be eligible for sectionals.

All players must be registered in TennisLink on the appropriate team prior to playing their first team match. USTA account numbers are required for registration. Junior memberships are free. If a player is having trouble registering, the player will still be allowed to play. Issues can include registering on TennisLink because of USTA membership problems, wrong team number or wrong USTA number. Again, as long as this player having problems registering has told the ALC or Team Captain at least 1 day in advance of the match day. **50%** of players need to live within the section.

Player Registration Fees

Team registration fees are $33.15 per team ($30 Section fee + $3.15 **TennisLink** administrative fee). Individual Program Providers may charge additional fees payable to the provider as required.

Player Registration

A player may be rostered on two different teams, provided the teams are not in the same division or level. For example, a 12U Novice player may also roster in the 14U Novice division but may not join another 12U Novice team. The Area League Coordinator reserves the right to approve or deny any player additions or removals. Players can only play up one age division.

NEW STARTING SUMMER 2026:
For the upcoming season, players must maintain the same level designation (e.g., Level 6) across all age divisions (12U, 14U, 18U) to prevent the manipulation of qualifications. While players may participate on more than one team, they are restricted to one level (L5, L6, or L7) throughout the season.

Players will determine their ball color (Orange, Green or Yellow) at the beginning of the season and remain there throughout the season, including Sectionals.

Player classification is determined by Net Generation points and tournament participation. Once a player reaches 1,000 Net Generation points, they are advanced to the Green classification. At that point, the Orange classification is no longer available to them, as it is designated for beginner-level players.

The Green classification represents the next stage of player development. Player movement between classifications is one-directional only; players may **not** move back to a previous ball color once they have advanced. Players are **not** permitted to compete across multiple ball color classifications simultaneously and must participate exclusively within their current, highest-achieved ball color classification.

At the Yellow level, players may compete in multiple age divisions. If two of their teams qualify for Sectionals, the player can select either division to compete at Sectionals.

Team Lineups

Coaches and managers for each team must exchange lineup cards simultaneously prior to the start of the match. All players are required to be registered on the team roster in TennisLink, or they must notify the Area League Coordinator (ALC) at least one day before the match that they will be participating. Players experiencing registration issues in TennisLink, such as problems with USTA membership, an incorrect team number, or an incorrect USTA number, may still compete provided they have informed the ALC or their team captain at least one day in advance of the match.

Match Substitutions

No substitutions may be made in an individual match after the lineup has been presented, except for injury to, or illness of, a player prior to the start of the match, and except under such further circumstances as the Area League Coordinator or JTT Manager may authorize. If the substitution is made during the warm-up, the substitute player is entitled to a five (5) minute warm-up. The substitution shall affect only the one position for which the substitution is made. The remaining lineup positions shall remain the same. Any team in need of 2+ substitutes will lose Sectionals invitation

10U Divisions/Net Generation PlayTracker

- Players ages 9-11, as well as players ages 7-8 who have successfully completed a Net Generation PlayTracker coach evaluation from Orange Ball to Green Ball with a USTA Coaching, USPTA, or PTR certified professional, are eligible to participate in the 10U Advanced Green Ball Division.
- Players earn 100 play points for completing a full Junior Team Tennis season (postseason wins are not included). In addition, Green Ball players receive 100 win points for each singles victory and 50 win points for each doubles victory, up to a maximum of 400 win points per season. A default in the Green Ball division will count as a win.
- PlayTracker progress can be viewed through a player's profile on **USTA.com**. For additional details, including Yellow Ball eligibility, please refer to the **Net Generation PlayTracker page**.

4. Match Management & Rules

Team Communication & Responsibilities

In addition to coaching and administrative duties, Team Management is responsible for maintaining consistent communication with players and parents. This includes providing timely updates on match schedules (noting that TennisLink schedules may not reflect any adjustments), lineups, and team statistics. A preseason meeting with parents and players is strongly recommended to review match format, sportsmanship expectations, and coaching guidelines.

By following these procedures, Team Management ensures all players are properly registered, eligible to compete, and placed in divisions that promote fair and competitive play.

Team & Match Management

Programs fielding two or more teams in the same division or flight must play and score head-to-head matches within the first two weeks of the scheduled season. If round-robin scheduling is required, the local Area League Coordinator will monitor match completion.

If a team cannot field separate players for each match line, a player may participate in both a singles and a doubles match at the appropriate line, provided the opposing Team Management is notified prior to the start of the match.

All matches must be supervised by at least one Safe Play approved adult whether that be a coach or parent from either team.

Team Management is responsible for confirming match times, dates, and the number of players for each match at least five days prior to the scheduled match. Any rescheduled match and date must be mutually agreed upon by both teams within three business days and recorded in TennisLink by the ALC. Teams should inform the opposing team of any available warm-up courts at the time of match confirmation and confirm which team will provide match balls. It is recommended that “visiting teams” supply match balls.

Once a lineup is exchanged with the opposing team, no changes may be made. All scheduled players must be present at the time of exchange, and official TennisLink score sheets must be used for all lineups. Water and restroom access must be readily available at match sites, and if water is not available, players must be advised to bring their own.

Court Monitors

Court Monitors are third party decision makers needed in case of line call or score issues. (Junior tournament rulebook precedent) Safe Play approval needed to be on court. Can either be a coach or a parent who is Safe Play approved.

Court/Racquet Requirements

Court Size Requirements: Matches played using Orange or Green Ball Tennis must be played on the court sizes below.

- **10U Orange Ball:** 60’ Court, either permanent lines, thrown down lines, or court tape are permitted
- **10U/12U Green Ball:** 78’ Court

Racquet Requirements: Players competing are required to use the following racquet sizes during local league season play:

- **10U Orange Ball:** Up to 25”
- **10U/12U Green Ball:** Up to 27”

If a player is observed playing with a non-eligible racquet, the player will be asked to change racquets that meet the size requirement.

Ball Requirements

The away team brings the balls for matches and the home team provides the courts. Unless otherwise stated in your specific section's rulebook as discussed at the beginning of the season.

Uniform & Dress Code

There are no mandatory team uniform requirements; however, teams may choose to wear uniforms if desired.

Hats, visors, or other headgear are permitted, provided they do not interfere with play or obstruct an opponent's visibility.

Cut-off shirts and excessively revealing crop tops are not permitted.

Footwear must be appropriate for the court surface to ensure safety and proper play.

Water & Restroom Access

Water and restroom access must be readily available at match sites, and if water is not available, players must be advised to bring their own.

Coaching

Coaching during matches is permitted by ***one*** Safe Play certified adult per team, who must be designated ***prior*** to the start of the match.

Coaching during matches is only allowed on changeovers, either on the court or through the fence.

Team management, parents, and spectators may not communicate with players during play in any language and must observe matches from outside the court.

In the Orange Ball and Novice divisions, assisting opposing players who are struggling with scoring or rules is allowed and encouraged to foster a learning environment and promote sportsmanship.

Scoring Disputes

Players are responsible for keeping score and making all line calls. Team managers and parents may not interfere. In the event of a dispute, players should attempt to resolve it on their own; if unsuccessful, they should summon the referee to the court.

*Coaches may overrule player line calls only if both coaches agree and no court monitor or USTA Official is present on site. Otherwise, the line call stands as called by the player.

Any further issues with line calls should be referred to in **Friend at Court Code** *PART 2—THE CODE THE PLAYERS' GUIDE TO FAIR PLAY AND THE UNWRITTEN RULES OF TENNIS*.

Format of Play & Scoring

Team management should consult the Area League Coordinator for the format of play in each division.

Teams must field a minimum of four (4) players per match, and in 18U Mixed divisions, at least two boys and two girls are required per match.

Official TennisLink Score Sheets will reflect the match ID, format of play, and applicable scoring formats. Score Sheets must be pulled from TennisLink and signed by team management from both teams at the conclusion of each match. The home team is responsible for entering scores online from the winning perspective within 48 hours, and the opposing team must confirm the results. Score changes will not be accepted after this period. Contact your Area League Coordinator (ALC) to review any scoring disputes and to request changes.

Players who are not registered before participating in a match will be defaulted. All signed score sheets should be retained through the end of the season for reference in resolving disputes. Do not score players that did not play. Players who are not registered before playing a match will be defaulted. KEEP signed score sheets through the end of the season for a reference to resolve any disputes.

Exhibition matches recorded with the ALC will count toward WTN ratings.

Teams with the most games recorded in TennisLink at the end of the season will advance to **Section Championships** unless a head-to-head playoff is required. If total games are tied, the division winner will be determined by full team match win/loss records.

Tie in Pool

In the event of a tie in pool or championship match play, the division winner will be determined by the first of the following criteria that applies:

1. Head-to-head match result
2. Team that lost the fewest number of games
3. Greatest number of matches won
4. One match randomly selected

These procedures are applied in order until the tie is resolved.

Late Arrival Rules

USTA SoCal prioritizes playing JTT matches over issuing defaults. So it is the coach's responsibility to make reasonable accommodations to make sure matches are played. In the event a player is running late, we will leave it up to the coaches to decide if the below should be implemented.

Please know that it is up to the coaches. Should either coach want to instill the default, they have full power to since this is a USTA league in which we will follow the USTA tournament rules on defaults.

0-5 minutes late: 1 game and loss of toss
6-10 minutes late: 2 games and loss of toss
11-15 minutes late: 3 games and loss of toss
16 minutes and after: Up to the coach to decide if they want to implement the default.

Note: Should a phone call be received from the parent or player to state they are running late due to an unforeseen factor, we encourage empathy and understanding.

No Shows & Suspensions

Players are expected to honor their commitment to their teams and opponents by showing up for all scheduled matches. Failure to do so is taken seriously and carries strict consequences:

- A ***first offense*** occurs when a player does not appear for a match, which must be confirmed by both coaches. Once verified, the opposing coach will notify the Area League Coordinator, who will then issue a formal letter to the player's parents and coach addressing the violation.
- If a ***second offense*** occurs, the process is repeated: the opposing coach will notify the Area League Coordinator, who will then contact the player and their parents directly. At that point, the player will be suspended from competition for the remainder of the current league season as well as the following season.

For example, if a player fails to appear for a scheduled match, the absence must be confirmed with their coach and the opposing coach before a report is made to the Adult League Coordinator. Once notified, the Adult League Coordinator will follow up with the necessary communication to the player and their parents.

Default & Forfeit Rules

A team unable to field the minimum number of players at the scheduled match time may be assessed a default or forfeit, unless both teams agree to reschedule in advance.

Defaults count toward PlayTracker and WTN points if the match has been officially scheduled and documented.

Teams must notify the opposing team and ALC at least 24 hours before the scheduled match if rescheduling is required.

Championship Advancement Clarifications

Teams with the most games recorded in TennisLink at the end of the season advance to Section Championships unless a head-to-head playoff is required.

If total games are tied, the division winner is determined using full team match win/loss records.

Matches canceled due to weather or other emergencies will be considered unplayed and may affect tie-break criteria; winning percentage may be used at the discretion of the Section Coordinator.

Post Season Play Eligibility

All divisions listed above will be represented at JTT Section Championships if a minimum number of teams qualify per division.

Teams must complete at least two (2) head-to-head matches during the regular season. Teams with the most games recorded in TennisLink advance to Section Championships unless a head-to-head playoff is necessary. If total games are tied, the division winner is determined by full team match win/loss records.

Players must have participated in two (2) recorded regular season matches during separate head-to-head matches (scores recorded with a unique match ID number) to be eligible for a Section Championships roster.

NEW STARTING SUMMER 2026:
Alternate matches are now restricted to WTN rating purposes only and will no longer count toward sectional tournament eligibility. A minimum of two played matches must be recorded in TennisLink. Default matches will not count toward eligibility. This change is intended to ensure the team that competes in the league is the same team that competes in sectionals.

Players can play on 2 teams but only if they are the same Division, ie 12UL6 and 14UL6. For sectionals, the player can choose either of the 2 Age Divisions. But can only play on ONE team at Sectionals.

Minimum qualification for Sectionals for 1-team automatic invites will be based on the following parameters:

- Two players on the roster must meet the division's WTN cutoff **(L6-34.9 and L5-28.99)** and be league match eligible for Sectionals.
- Team WTN average within 1.5 WTN of division cutoff: **(L6-36.5 and L5-30.5)**

If a team falls below the six-player minimum due to a player being unable to compete at Sectionals, a maximum of one (1) substitute may be added to complete a full roster. The substitute must be registered, have participated in the JTT season, be of equal or higher WTN than the player being replaced, and receive approval from the ALC and JTT Manager.

Any team requiring two (2) or more substitutes will forfeit its Sectionals invitation, unless the shortage is due to an injury that prevents a player from competing.

Teams may be invited to participate in various divisions at the discretion of the Section Coordinator.

Medical Timeouts

Only individuals meeting Safe Play requirements, including the team coach, parent, legal guardian, or other authorized personnel associated with the player, may assist an injured or bleeding player.

- Medical timeouts allow up to three minutes of treatment once all necessary supplies are brought to the court.
- Players may take one medical timeout per medical condition for cramping or heat-related injuries.
- One medical timeout is allowed per medical condition, but two consecutive medical timeouts for different medical conditions is not permitted.
    - *(For example, if a player twists an ankle, they may take a medical timeout. They cannot take an additional medical timeout for the same twisted ankle, but may take an additional medical timeout for a strained shoulder.)*
- Bleeding timeouts may last up to 15 minutes to stop bleeding, clean the court, and dispose of contaminated materials, with only one bleeding timeout allowed per match.
- Fatigue or medical conditions that cannot be treated during the match do not qualify for a timeout.
- Injections other than insulin injections are not permitted.
- Diabetic players may use devices to check blood sugar and administer subcutaneous injections of insulin as needed, or use battery-powered insulin pumps.
- Asthmatics may use a manual inhaler.

5. Playing Conditions & Safety

Weather Guidelines

USTA Southern California prioritizes the health and safety of all participants. Team Management should monitor weather conditions leading up to and during matches. Decisions regarding the continuation, suspension, or rescheduling of play should prioritize player safety and follow the guidance of the Area League Coordinator (ALC) or Tournament Committee.

When extreme weather conditions are anticipated, Team Management should consult the ***USTA's Emergency Care Guidelines*** in the Friend at Court Code of Conduct and adjust match plans accordingly. If captains are unable to make a decision, the Area League Coordinator has the authority to overrule.

Thunderstorms and Lightning

Lightning is a serious, potentially life-threatening hazard for outdoor tennis. All matches and warm-ups must stop immediately if lightning is observed. Players, coaches, and spectators should be directed to seek safe shelter without delay.

The ***30-30 rule*** can help determine risk:

- If thunder follows lightning within 30 seconds, everyone on site should move to a safe location.

- To estimate lightning distance in miles, divide the number of seconds between the flash and the thunder by 5 (e.g., 30 seconds = 6 miles).
- Tennis activity may only resume after **at least 30 minutes** have passed since the last lightning strike was seen.

Preferred shelter locations:

- A substantial, frequently occupied building with electricity, plumbing, and telephones. Avoid using corded devices or taking showers while inside.
- If a building is unavailable, a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and closed windows is the next safest option. Avoid touching metal surfaces inside the vehicle.

Locations to avoid: Open fields, bodies of water, and proximity to trees, flagpoles, or light poles.

If someone is struck by lightning, call emergency medical services immediately. If it can be done safely, move the person to a secure location.

Air Quality

For USTA Southern California, the following outlines competition formats in accordance with **Air Quality Guidelines** which are based on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards. Local air quality is monitored via **airnow.gov**.

- 0-50 (Good): Play proceeds as scheduled.
- 51-100 (Moderate): Play continues; no adjustments necessary.
- 101-150 (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups): Shortened match formats and increased rest periods are recommended.
- 151-200 (Unhealthy): Play must be suspended for at least 15 minutes until conditions improve below 151.
- 201-300 (Very Unhealthy): Matches should be canceled.
- 301+ (Hazardous): Play may not continue under any circumstances.

Decisions regarding match adjustments may differ by site, as air quality and environmental conditions can vary locally. Any changes to match formats or schedules for junior play must be approved by the Tournament Committee or USTA Southern California staff as appropriate, and apply only to the affected match site rather than the entire tournament.

Heat Index Thresholds

USTA Southern California recommends the following heat index guidelines for safe play:

- Below 80°F: Normal play.
- 80-89°F: Monitor players closely; provide water breaks every 20 minutes.
- 90-99°F: Consider shortening matches or implementing additional rest periods; mandatory water breaks every 15 minutes.
- 100°F and above: Suspend all outdoor play until conditions improve.

These thresholds should be applied alongside air quality and other environmental factors.

Emergency Protocols

All teams must have a plan for emergencies. This includes:

- Knowledge of nearest medical facilities.
- Designated adults responsible for player supervision during incidents.
- Immediate communication with the ALC or tournament officials.

Severe Injury Procedures

In the event of a severe injury on court:

- Stop play immediately and secure the area.
- Assess the situation to determine the severity of injury.
- Ensure other players, parents, and spectators are safe and out of harm's way.
- Provide basic first aid only if trained and certified.

Calling EMS

- Dial 911 immediately for serious injuries requiring emergency care.
- Provide clear information: location, nature of injury, number of individuals involved, and any known medical conditions.
- Keep injured players calm and avoid unnecessary movement unless safety requires relocation.

Incident Reporting

All serious injuries or incidents must be reported to the ALC and USTA Southern California staff within ***24 hours***.

- Complete a formal Incident Report Form via the Junior Team Tennis Provider page.
- Include: date, time, location, individuals involved, description of the incident, and any actions taken.
- Incident reports may be reviewed by Section Management and used to determine additional safety measures or follow-up actions.

6. Administrative & Facility Requirements

Additional Insured for Facilities

The USTA will provide a certificate of insurance for match sites that require an additional insured. Requests for coverage may be submitted through the **Junior Team Tennis Provider page**.

7. Resources & Contacts

USTA Southern California Resources

- **USTA Resources for Players**
- **USTA Southern California Junior Tennis Webpage**

- USTA Southern California Junior Tennis Resources, Forms, & Information
- USTA Southern California Junior Team Tennis Webpage
- USTA Southern California Junior Team Tennis Resources, Forms, & Information
- USTA Southern California Junior Team Tennis Section Championships Information
- USTA Southern California Sportsmanship
- 2025 Friend at Court

USTA Southern California JTT Provider Area Webpages

- Bakersfield
- Inland Empire
- Los Angeles
- Orange County
- San Diego County
- San Fernando Valley/Santa Clarita
- San Gabriel Valley
- South Bay/Long Beach
- Ventura County