

# Manitoba Soccer Association Inc.

211 Chancellor Matheson Rd | Winnipeg, MB | R3T 1Z2  
mbsoccer@manitobasoccer.ca | P: 204.594.5809 | F: 204.594.5139  
www.manitobasoccer.ca



## MSA-CS Grassroots Soccer Program – FAQ

### **Q: What are the new changes to grassroots soccer in Manitoba?**

A: Manitoba Soccer is aligning its grassroots programming with Canada Soccer's national standards, which emphasize inclusive, developmentally appropriate environments for players aged 8–13. Key changes include eliminating tryouts, introducing open registration, rotating training groups, and replacing leagues with festival-style events.

### **Q: What is the difference between developmental and grassroots programming now?**

A: The primary goal of Grassroots Programming is to keep more young players involved in soccer for longer by providing them with an enjoyable experience through access to high quality training and meaningful competition based on interest rather than ability. Clubs are encouraged to offer programming based on training frequency. Families who wish to take part more 'recreationally' would be able to do so regardless of ability level while still receiving quality programming.

### **Q: How will players be grouped if there are no tryouts or permanent rosters?**

A: Players will be placed into fluid groupings that change week to week based on growth, engagement, and effort. This model supports player development without the pressure of fixed rankings.

### **Q: What is station-based training?**

A: Station-based training is a format where players rotate through small-group stations focused on specific skills. It ensures higher engagement and more touches on the ball.

### **Q: What are rotating training groups?**

A: Rotating groups mean players will consistently train with different teammates and coaches to ensure broad exposure, reduce bias, and support well-rounded growth.

### **Q: How will the year be structured for soccer programming?**

A: Programming will be delivered in seasonal blocks, potentially totaling 30 weeks per year, split into three blocks of 8–12 weeks from March to January. Families can register for one, two, or all blocks.

### **Q: What options are available in winter months when space is limited?**

A: Clubs may offer futsal-style play, scaled-down indoor station training based on space availability, or outdoor festivals where weather permits.



**Q: Who will manage the games if referees are not used in younger age groups?**

**A:** Games at the grassroots level (festival style) will be facilitated by Game Leaders, scheduled by the host club. One or two Game Leaders will help run each match with the active support of both team coaches. The Game Leader will look to achieve a few objectives on the field: Enable children to have a fun and rewarding experience while competing in small-sided games; Ensure player safety; Implement simplified rules while keeping the game moving — limiting stoppages and assisting the young players with all restarts. Referees will not be used for the younger age groups, as the emphasis is on development, enjoyment, and learning rather than formal officiating.

**Q: Who does this affect?**

**A:** All MSA member youth clubs delivering U8–U13 programming will be required to follow this model. MSA will support clubs through training, audits, and resources.

**Q: Why are these changes important?**

**A:** They foster inclusive, player-first environments, remove early selection pressures, improve coaching consistency, and align Manitoba with national player development standards.