



# St. Kitts-Nevis Football Association Club Licensing Regulations - 2023



# Preamble

The following are regulations of the St. Kitts-Nevis Football Association, hereinafter referred to as SKNFA, which reflect the principles of the FIFA and CONCACAF Club Licensing Regulations.

The SKNFA recognizes the everyday effort club stakeholders, especially their owners and administrators, make for our footballers, professional and amateur, youth and senior, female and male, to have an opportunity to play football, beach soccer and futsal. These efforts also contribute to bringing the beautiful game to fans at the stadiums, on their television screens and on the radio so that all may enjoy football.

The Club Licensing Regulations have been designed as a development tool for all football clubs in St. Kitts & Nevis and to outline the minimum requirements for Football Clubs participating or aspiring to participate in the SKNFA Leagues.

The criteria outlined in these regulations have been carefully selected to serve as guidelines for clubs looking to increase their professionalism.

Clubs are invited to read the St. Kitts and Nevis Football Association Club Licensing Regulations and understand what is expected of them prior to application for a particular Club License.

The current version of the St. Kitts-Nevis Football Association Club Licensing Regulations was adopted by the Executive Committee on 31st October 2022.

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## Section I: Introduction

### **Article 1: Goals of the Club Licensing Project**

The overall aim of Club Licensing is to raise the level of club football. Four main goals have been developed:

1. Understand and safeguard club football.
2. Raise the level of professionalism in club football administration.
3. Identify and share best practices of our clubs and leagues.
4. Formalize requirements for participation in domestic and regional club competitions.

### **Article 2: The Two Levels of Criteria**

The criteria described in the SKNFA Club Licensing Regulations are divided into two separate categories and have been defined as follows:

- A. Regional Criteria  
Platinum-
- B. Domestic Criteria  
Introduction of a “Star” Incentive Program
  - The Plan will go based on a “star” with 1 star being the lowest and 5 stars being the highest
  - A 1-star license club is a club with no additional team (for e.g., Youth, women)
  - A 2-star License club is a club with an additional team with their first team (Women or Youth)
  - A 3-star license club is a club with additional teams (e.g., Women & Youth)
  - A 4-star license club is a club with additional teams (e.g., Women, 2 Youth)
  - A 5 Star license club is a club with additional team (e.g., Women, 3 or more Youth team)

### **Article 3: Scope of Application**

1. These regulations apply to the following categories of clubs, which participate in domestic leagues at the SKNFA, as well as those clubs aiming to participate in CONCACAF club competitions:

- a) First and second division men’s football clubs.
- b) First division women’s football clubs.
- c) First division men’s and women’s beach soccer clubs.
- d) First division men’s and women’s futsal clubs.

2. These regulations govern the rights, duties and responsibilities of all parties involved in the SKNFA Club Licensing system and define in particular:

- The minimum requirements to be fulfilled by the SKNFA to act as the licensor for our clubs.
- The license applicant (club) and the license required to enter the domestic club competitions and CONCACAF club competitions.
- The minimum infrastructure, sporting, administration, financial, legal, and social responsibility criteria to be fulfilled by a club to be granted a license by the SKNFA as part of the admission procedure to enter the domestic or CONCACAF club competition.

## **Section II: SKNFA Club Licensing System**

### **Article 4: Exception Policy**

The CONCACAF Administration may grant exceptions to the provisions set out in these regulations.

### **Article 5: SKNFA Responsibilities**

The SKNFA is the licensor of the Club Licensing System and is therefore in charge of implementing the Club Licensing System at the national level. For the implementation of the national Club Licensing System, the SKNFA will:

- a) Include a provision regarding Club Licensing in the Statutes. As an alternative, the Club Licensing system may also be based on a binding agreement between the club and the SKNFA or between the club and the affiliated league to which the Club Licensing system has been delegated.
- b) Appoint a Club Licensing Manager.
- c) Adapt the CONCACAF Club Licensing Regulations to national Club Licensing Regulations to be recognized by CONCACAF.
- d) Appoint or elect the Decision-Making Bodies.
- e) Establish a Catalogue of Sanctions as outlined in Article 14.

### **Article 6: The SKNFA's Club Licensing Administration**

Upon completion of the tasks outlined in Article 5, the SKNFA's established Club Licensing Administration, under the guidance of the Club Licensing Manager, will:

- a) Finalize the Club Licensing Support Manual.
- b) Determine deadlines for documentation to be presented by the club to the SKNFA Club Licensing Manager.
- c) Send invitation letters to all local clubs to apply for a national license.
- d) Review documentation submitted by clubs.
- e) Visit each club during the licensing process.
- f) Base the license decision-making process on a two-instance approach (i.e., first instance and appeal instance).
- g) Inform CONCACAF of all license decisions (approvals and denials).

### **Article 7: The Football Club**

1. The football club is defined as being the legal entity fully responsible for a football team, which participates in national and international club competitions and is a member of or is affiliated to the SKNFA.
2. The status of a football club (professional, semi-professional or amateur) is not relevant to the issue of a license.
3. The legal form or structure of a football club is not relevant to the issue of a license.
4. Only a registered member or an affiliate of the SKNFA may apply for a license. Natural persons may not apply for a license.
5. The club is fully responsible for participation in national and international football competitions as well as the fulfillment of the Club Licensing criteria within the deadlines established by CONCACAF and the SKNFA.

## **Article 8: The Club Licensing Decision-Making Bodies**

1. The SKNFA shall establish two Club Licensing decision-making bodies which can be appointed or elected.
2. The Club Licensing decision-making bodies shall be independent from each other. They shall receive administrative support from the Club Licensing Administration. A member of the Club Licensing decision-making bodies must in all cases immediately abstain from participating in the licensing process if there is any doubt as to his/her independence towards the club or if there is a conflict of interest.
3. The SKNFA may nominate administrative staff of the SKNFA and the affiliated leagues as members of the first instance Club Licensing decision-making body, except for the Club Licensing Manager.
4. The first instance Club Licensing decision-making body shall decide on whether a license shall be granted to a club based on the documents provided and in accordance with the provisions of the Club Licensing Regulations at the submission deadline set by the SKNFA.
5. The appeal instance Club Licensing decision-making body shall decide on appeals submitted in writing and make a final and binding decision on whether a license shall be granted.
6. All decisions by the Club Licensing decision-making bodies must be made in writing and if a license is rejected, the motive for refusal must be reasoned.
7. The SKNFA may delegate the duties of the Club Licensing decision-making bodies to other existing bodies (e.g., committees and commissions).

## **Article 9: The Decision-Making Procedure**

In the Club Licensing Regulations or in the Support Manual, the SKNFA shall define procedural rules with respect to decision-making. These shall, as a minimum, regulate the following standards:

- a) Deadlines (e.g., submission deadlines).
- b) The principle of equal treatment.
- c) Representation (e.g., legal representation).
- d) The right to be heard (e.g., convocation, hearing).
- e) Official language(s).
- f) Time limit to issue a request (e.g., calculation, compliance, interruption, and extension thereof), time limit to appeal.
- g) Effect of the appeal.
- h) Type of evidence requested.
- i) Burden of proof (e.g., club has burden of proof).
- j) Decisions (in writing with reasoning, etc.).
- k) Ground for complaint.
- l) Content and form of pleading.
- m) Deliberation and hearings.
- n) Cost of procedure, administrative fee, and deposit.

## **Article 10: The License**

1. Licenses will be issued by the SKNFA according to the provisions of these recognized Club Licensing Regulations.
2. The SKNFA will communicate to all Clubs the Club Licensing requirements to be fulfilled by all clubs for participation in the 2023 season.

3. Only clubs which fulfill the criteria established in these recognized Club Licensing Regulations by the relevant deadline will be granted.
4. The SKNFA must indicate the license expiration date.
5. A license may be withdrawn by the Club Licensing decision-making bodies during a season if:
  - a) For any reason a club becomes insolvent and enters liquidation during the season, as determined by the applicable national law (where a club becomes insolvent but enters administration during the season, the license should not be withdrawn if the purpose of the administration is to rescue the club and its business).
  - b) Any of the conditions for the issue of a license are no longer satisfied; or
  - c) The club violates any of its obligations under the national regulations.
  - d) A club license cannot be transferred.

## **Provisional License**

Clubs must receive a provisional license to commence participation in the 2023 Football Season. The following documents must be submitted to the SKNFA no later than December 31st, 2022:

1. Club participation form
2. Registration of Executive Members
3. Registration of Premier or Division One Team
4. Registration of other Teams and Club Officials
5. Registration of teams and transfer of players using FIFA Connect System
6. Payment of registration fees for teams
7. Names of Insured (all teams)
8. 2023 Budget
9. Income and Expenditure for 2021-2022 (SKNFA GRANT)
10. Adoption of Primary School and Memorandum of understanding
11. Signed Statutes

The SKNFA will grant a Provisional Club License to all clubs that have met the above requirements and deadlines.

### **Sanctions**

The clubs that fail to submit their documentations by the December 31st, 2022, deadline will be fined \$250.00 from the clubs' top team in either the Premier or Division I Leagues in the SKNFA 2023-Football Season.

## **Full Club License**

All clubs must receive a full club license to continue their participation in the 2023 Football Season. The following documents must be submitted to the SKNFA no later than January 31st, 2023, to become fully licensed.

2021 Financial Statements

## **Sanctions**

- The clubs that fail to adhere to the January 31st, 2023, deadline for the submission of the above documentations will receive a First Written Warning with a February 3rd, 2023, new deadline.
- If that new deadline is not met, the club shall be fined two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) and a (Second Written Warning) and a new deadline of February 10th, 2023
- If the second deadline is not met the club shall be fined five hundred dollars (\$500.00) and a Third Written Warning be sent to the clubs with a new deadline of February 17th, 2023, as the final date to comply. If a club is not fully compliant by the third deadline, then the club will be summoned to the Disciplinary Committee, where further sanctions may be imposed.

### **Article 11: Equal Treatment and Confidentiality**

1. The SKNFA ensures equal treatment of all clubs applying for a license.
2. The SKNFA guarantees the clubs full confidentiality regarding all information submitted during the licensing process. Anyone involved in the licensing process or appointed by the SKNFA must sign a confidentiality agreement before assuming their tasks.

### **ARTICLE 12A: SKNFA Spot Check**

SKNFA reserves the right to conduct spot checks of the clubs, stadiums, training facilities and headquarters at any time

### **Article 12B: CONCACAF Spot Checks**

1. CONCACAF reserves the right to conduct spot checks, at any time, to the SKNFA and/or the clubs, stadiums, training facilities and headquarters.
2. FIFA has the right to request CONCACAF to carry out a specific spot check.
3. The spot checks aim to ensure licenses have been correctly awarded by the SKNFA at the time of the final and binding decision.
4. Upon FIFA's request, CONCACAF shall send FIFA comprehensive reports about the results of the spot checks.
5. If CONCACAF determines that the SKNFA issued a license in breach of the national and CONCACAF Club Licensing Regulations, the Member Association shall be sanctioned by CONCACAF's Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the applicable disciplinary regulations. If deemed appropriate, the matter may also be referred to CONCACAF's Ethics Committee.

### **Article 13: FIFA Spot Checks**

1. If CONCACAF fails to implement a spot check procedure, does not carry out spot checks to the SKNFA or does not send to FIFA, at its request, comprehensive reports about the result of the spot checks, FIFA shall set CONCACAF a deadline to do so. If this deadline is not respected by CONCACAF, FIFA has the right to carry out the spot checks directly. The SKNFA is obliged to cooperate with FIFA for this purpose and provide FIFA with full access to the files.
2. If FIFA realizes that the SKNFA has issued a license in breach of the national and CONCACAF Club Licensing Regulations, FIFA shall inform CONCACAF so the latter can sanction the Member Association in accordance with Article 12. If CONCACAF fails to act or fails to



impose sanctions, FIFA shall set CONCACAF a deadline to do so. If this deadline is not respected by CONCACAF, the FIFA Disciplinary Committee has the right to sanction the Member Association directly in accordance with the FIFA Disciplinary Code.

#### **Article 14: Catalogue of Sanctions**

Under the Club Licensing Regulations or the Support Manual, the SKNFA will establish a Catalogue of Sanctions for the Club Licensing system (e.g., for non-fulfillment of Domestic Criteria). The Catalogue of Sanctions may include, but is not limited to:

- a) a caution.
- b) a fine.
- c) extend deadline to fulfill criteria
- d) the obligation to submit evidence or fulfill certain conditions by a certain deadline.
- e) the deduction of points.
- f) a prohibition on concluding new transfer agreements or players' contracts.
- g) the obligation to submit guarantees.
- h) Withhold grants and or prize money
- i) license review and or withdrawal

#### **Article 15: Option for the SKNFA to Delegate the Club Licensing System to an Affiliated League**

1. The SKNFA may delegate the Club Licensing system to an affiliated league, subject to the approval of CONCACAF's General Secretariat.
2. The SKNFA, as a member of CONCACAF, remains fully responsible for the proper implementation of the Club Licensing system, regardless of whether there is a delegation.

### **Section III: SKNFA Club Licensing Criteria**

#### **I. INFRASTRUCTURE CRITERIA**

Implementation of the Infrastructure Criteria is aimed at ensuring that clubs have adequate stadiums and training facilities for all matches and training sessions, as well as informing clubs of the minimum requirements their stadiums must comply with to participate in CONCACAF club competitions.

#### **Domestic Criteria**

#### **Article 16: Club Infrastructure Form**

The club must accurately complete and submit the online Club Infrastructure Form.

#### **Article 17: The Stadium (Domestic Competitions)**

1. The club must have a stadium available to host home matches through one of the following options:
  - a) The club legally owns the stadium; or

- b) The club rents a stadium or is permitted to use a stadium free of charge. The club must provide a copy of the written contract or agreement with the owner of the stadium. The contract or agreement specifying the club's use of the stadium for all home matches should be, at a minimum, for the duration of the upcoming season.

2. The field of play must comply with the FIFA Laws of the Game.

### **Article 18: The Training Fields**

The club must have all its training fields registered with the SKNFA.

### **Article 19: The Headquarters**

The club must have a registered address with the SKNFA which represents the headquarters of the club.

## **Regional Criteria:**

### **Article 20: The Stadium (Regional Competitions)**

The stadium registered by the club to host home matches must meet all the requirements of the CONCACAF club competition the club is aiming to participate in.

## **II. SPORTING CRITERIA**

Implementation of the Sporting Criteria is aimed at identifying and increasing the number of footballers and coaches while improving the experience for youth players at club level.

### **Domestic Criteria:**

#### **Article 21: Club Youth Development Form**

The club must accurately complete and submit the Club Youth Development Form.

#### **Article 22: Head Coach and Assistant Coach**

- The Head Coach and Assistant Coach of all leagues with exception of the U13 leagues must have the minimum CONCACAF C or higher qualifications (copy of qualifications must be submitted to SKNFA secretariat)
- The Head Coach of the Premier League Team cannot be a Coach or an Assistant Coach of any other team. On match day, sit in the Technical or locker room area, make decisions or give instructions including instructions from the stands to any teams or players in their clubs outside of the Premier team.
- All Youth and Women's team must have a Head Coach and Assistant Coach.
- All coaches must attend the SKNFA Annual Refresher Coaching Course (there will be 2 different seminars, one that caters to the Premier and Division 1 coaches and the other for women's and youth leagues coaches)

### **Article 23a: Youth Teams**

All Clubs must have at least one of the following to participate in Premier Division:

- One youth team (boys) within the age range of 10-15
- One youth team (boys) within the age range of 16 to 19

### **Article 23b: Grassroots**

All Clubs must have:

- Grassroots program (a minimum of 10 players ages 6-12)
- The clubs must have a minimum of (1) SKNFA trained grassroots coach

### **Article 24: Women's Football**

All Clubs must have 1 of 4 options:

- Senior women team (to participate in SKNFA 11v11 competitions and or SKNFA small-sided games competitions)
- Participate in the 2023 9v9 Women's Competition.
- Female Youth team within age range of 10-15 (small-sided competitions only)
- Participate in Female in U12 Youth League.

In the case of a Women's Football team, the club must appoint a minimum of one female (minimum CONCACAF D License) as either the head coach or assistant coach positions to each female team.

### **Article 25: Medical Care**

- All medical persons (with exception of the qualified physio, trainer, doctor, or nurse) for teams in SKNFA leagues must attend SKNFA Fitness/Medical Course to be allowed in the technical area.
- The club must appoint a qualified or registered medical practitioner who is responsible for the medical welfare of its players.
- All players must undergo and pass a sports physical examination prior to the start of each season.

### **Article 26: Registration of All Club Teams and Players**

All Clubs must complete registrations for their teams using FIFA Connect Platform.

The following information are to be provided:

1. First and last names of players
2. Gender
3. Address
4. Date of Birth
5. Player's Photo
6. Parents' consent form

### **Article 27: Technical Development Coordinator (TDC)**

- All Clubs in the SKNFA Premier Division must nominate a person to be trained as its Technical Development Coordinator. The Technical Development Coordinator will be implemented in clubs for the 2023 season.

The Technical Development Coordinator is the person who organizes and manages activities and events for grassroots, youth football, women team, coach education and all other activities.

## **III. ADMINISTRATION CRITERIA**

Implementation of the Administration Criteria is aimed at encouraging clubs to appoint individuals to key administrative roles to increase the level of professionalism at the organizations.

### **Domestic Criteria:**

#### **Article 28: Club General Form**

The club must accurately complete and submit the Club General Form.

#### **Article 29: General Manager/President**

The club must elect a General Manager/President who is responsible for running its daily operations.

#### **Article 30: Media Officer/PRO**

The club must elect a Media Officer who is responsible for its media operations.

#### **Article 31: Finance Officer/Treasurer**

The club must elect/appoint a Finance Officer/Treasurer who is responsible for its financial operations. This individual can be either a person working in the club's administration, or an external partner mandated by the club through a written contract.

#### **Article 32: Marketing Officer**

The club must have appointed a Marketing Officer who is responsible for its marketing activities.

### **Regional Criteria:**

#### **Article 33: Medical Staff**

The club must appoint to the first team at least one doctor and one physiotherapist certified by the national health authorities.

#### **Article 34: Security Officer**

The club must appoint a Security Officer who is responsible for its safety and security operations.

#### **IV. FINANCIAL CRITERIA**

Implementation of the Financial Criteria is aimed at assisting the SKNFA with understanding the financial capabilities of the clubs, while safeguarding the continuity of club competitions.

##### **Domestic Criteria:**

###### **Article 35: Club Finance Form**

The club must accurately complete and submit the online Club Finance Form.

###### **Article 36: Budget and Financial Statements**

- All clubs must prepare and submit the SKNFA Grant Programme budget for the upcoming season 2023
- All Clubs must submit an Income and Expenditure Statement for the SKNFA Grant Programme Funds for 2023 Season by 30th November 2022.

##### **Regional Criteria:**

###### **Article 37: Financial Statements**

The clubs must prepare and submit its 2021 Financial Statements (Income Statement) in accordance with proper accounting standards by 30th November 2022.

#### **I. LEGAL CRITERIA**

Implementation of the Legal Criteria is aimed at assisting the SKNFA with protecting the integrity of club competitions, while formalizing the legal structures of clubs.

##### **Domestic Criteria:**

###### **Article 38: Legal Declaration**

The club must submit a legally valid declaration confirming the following:

- a) It recognizes as legally binding the Statutes, (all clubs must revise their statutes to be in line with the SKNFA statutes in the 2023 season) regulations and decisions of FIFA, CONCACAF, the respective Regional Union (CFU or UNCAF), the SKNFA and of the national league.
- b) It recognizes the exclusive jurisdiction of CAS (the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne) for any dispute of international dimension and in particular involving FIFA, CONCACAF and the SKNFA.
- c) It recognizes the prohibition on recourse to ordinary courts under the FIFA Statutes and the CONCACAF Statutes.
- d) At national level, it will play in competitions that are recognized and endorsed by the SKNFA (e.g., national championship, national cup).
- e) At regional level, it will participate in competitions recognized by CONCACAF, CFU or UNCAF. For the avoidance of doubt, this provision does not relate to friendly matches.
- f) It undertakes to abide by and observe the provisions and conditions of the national regulations.

- g) All submitted documents under the Club Licensing system are complete and accurate.
- h) It authorizes the competent Club Licensing authority to examine documents, seek information and in the event of any appeal procedure, seek information from any relevant public authority or private body in accordance with national law.
- i) It acknowledges that CONCACAF reserves the right to conduct spot checks at national level to review the assessment and decision-making processes.
- j) It acknowledges that FIFA reserves the right to conduct spot checks at national level to review the assessment and decision-making processes.

This declaration must be executed by an authorized signatory of the club.

#### **Article 39: Ownership and Control of Clubs**

The club must submit a legally valid declaration outlining the ownership structure (if applicable) and control mechanism of the club.

#### **Article 40: Statutes and Extract of Register\***

The club must provide the following documents:

- a) A copy of the club's valid Statutes or the equivalent legal document.
- b) If applicable, an extract from a public register (e.g., trade register) containing information on the club (such as name, address, legal form, list of authorized signatories and type of required signature).

### **Regional Criteria:**

#### **Article 41: Anti-Racism Protocol**

The club must inform (and instruct) its players, officials, and fans of the CONCACAF Anti-Racism protocol for matches.

#### **Article 42: Written Contracts with Professional Players**

All professional players employed by the club must have a written employment contract with the club (see Articles 2 and 5 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players).

## **VI. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CRITERIA**

Implementation of the Social Responsibility Criteria will be aimed at increasing the involvement and impact of clubs in their local communities.

The current SKNFA Club Licensing Regulations do not contain any Social Responsibility Criteria for the clubs to fulfill.

All Clubs must adopt a primary school team and commit to at least (1) social activity to give back to their respective communities. The adoption of the school team must be completed by the end of the 1st round and the community social activity must be completed by the 2nd Round of the 2023 season.

Social Activity can include but not limited to:

- Beautification of a symbol or area
- Cleanup of the community
- Donation to the Elderly, disadvantage, or under-privileged children
- Donation to school, churches etc.

## **Section IV: Final Provisions**

### **Article 43: Authoritative Text**

If there is any discrepancy in the interpretation of the English, Spanish or French versions of these regulations, the English version shall be authoritative.

### **Article 44: Language of Correspondence**

All correspondence between CONCACAF and the SKNFA, the league and/or club must be in one of CONCACAF's official languages (English, Spanish or French). If any correspondence is not written in any of CONCACAF's official languages, then CONCACAF may request any party for a certified translation of documents at their expense.

### **Article 45: Adoption and Entry into Force**

These regulations were adopted by the SKNFA Executive Committee on the 31st day of October 2022 and come into force with immediate effect.



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