



2026 Championship Year Local, Sectional & National Rules And Regulations Pinellas, Manatee, & Sarasota Counties

Adult Local Play Coordinator: Janine Dennis

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LOCAL REGULATIONS

All USTA Leagues will adhere to these USTA League National, Florida Section, and Local Regulations. Local regulations are developed to supplement the National and Section Regulations will not supersede them. The Local, Florida Section, and National regulations are published on the USTA Florida website. These regulations apply to USTA Florida Adult, Mixed, Combo and Tri-level league programs. They do not necessarily apply to any other social league play or tennis events offered by USTA Florida. For rules not addressed in the Local, Section or National rules, players will follow the Rules of Tennis as indicated in Friend at Court.

SCHEDULING

- **Captain's Meetings:** Team Captains or a team representative are required to attend their local captains' meetings in order to be eligible for captain's gifts. Team Captains are responsible for understanding current regulations that pertain to the league that they are participating in regardless of attendance. Current Local, Sectional, & National regulations are available online for this area at: <https://www.ustaflorida.com/local-play/>.
- **Facility Requirements:** Teams must have a home facility that can host at least two home matches. No traveling teams will be allowed. Players must have the express approval of the facility to host a team prior to requesting a team number. When applicable, the Home team is responsible for any facility/guest fees assessed for league matches. Home facilities must have a minimum of three courts per league. In addition, facilities must provide restrooms, water and chairs on or near courts for players available at the time of the match. Operational lighted courts are required for all evening play. Courts with additional blended lines (used to reduce court dimensions) are acceptable for recreational league play.
- **Roster Forms:** Minimum rosters are required to be registered in TennisLink by the stated deadline and must meet the required criteria. Coordinator may adjust deadline dates as needed.
- **Roster Limits:** Roster Limits will be imposed for all leagues. Leagues that play four or five lines will be allowed 20 players and leagues that play three lines will be allowed 18 players. Players may continue to be added to rosters, up to the maximum, until there are at least two matches left in the regular season. Any match played by a non-registered player will be defaulted (NR 1.04C(1)).
- **Schedules:** Captains/Facilities will be asked to provide "blackout dates" prior to the scheduling process. The official schedule with match dates & times will be published and posted on TennisLink at least five (5) days before match play begins. Captains are responsible for confirming court reservations for their home matches. Facilities should notify the Local Play Coordinator immediately if there are any conflicts or issues, including any match time changes due to court availability. Due to facility availability, it is possible that teams will not have equal home and away matches during a season. Changes to the schedule are always at the discretion of the Local Play Coordinator.
- **Defaults:** Teams must play ALL matches scheduled or a grievance may be filed against the entire team (FLORIDA - 2.01C(3)b).
- **Flights:** The Local Play Coordinator is responsible for all decisions pertaining to whether and how leagues and divisions are flighted in order to accomplish the best play opportunities, within the required deadlines, for advancing to Sectional and National events.
- **Local Play Coordinators:** Local Play Coordinators may seek feedback from captains and players in order to offer the best possible experience, but shall determine what days, times, and formats of play are offered for each USTA play opportunity in their assigned geographic region. Their express mission is "to promote and develop tennis for all" in their area. Not all requests can be honored.

RESCHEDULES & SUSPENDED PLAY POLICIES

ALL TEAMS are required to play ALL matches according to the published schedule. If both captains agree, any match may be played earlier than the scheduled match date. The Local Play Coordinator retains the authority to change the schedule at any time deemed necessary. No rescheduling of matches by captains or co-captains may occur except under the following circumstances: inclement weather, facility issues, USTA local league playoffs, Sectionals and/or Nationals. One travel date before and/or after the dates associated with Sectionals/Nationals are included.

GENERAL POLICIES

- If a team experiences a conflict of any kind, the home team may secure alternate courts within a reasonable distance of the original match site. Alternately, the opponent's courts may be used if available. The home team remains responsible for any facility/court fees incurred.
- When matches are canceled or postponed for any reason, it is preferred that captains reschedule immediately, but matches must be rescheduled within 72 hours after the originally scheduled date. The agreed upon date must be emailed to the LPC immediately upon agreement with both captains included.
- The home team captain should offer three viable alternate dates/times that their facility is available. The rescheduled match must be played within 14 days of the originally scheduled match date, or within 7 days of the last scheduled match, or before any local league playoff, or before the end of the league season, whichever comes first. Any matches not played by these deadlines will be entered as a total team default for both teams.
- Once a reschedule date has been agreed upon, that date becomes the new match date and must be played as scheduled unless it is subsequently rained out.
- If a date cannot be agreed upon within these set timeframes, then the LPC will set the date, time, and place in which both teams must be present. If either captain is unable to field any position on the rescheduled date and time, that position will be defaulted.
- In two team leagues, both captains may agree to reschedule matches and/or extend makeup match deadlines by notifying the Local Play Coordinator.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Inclement weather situations considered for rescheduling are rain, lightning, hurricane or tornado watch/ warning, or any unsafe weather condition deemed by either captain or facility. Any player that becomes concerned about safety in a match already in progress, may suspend their match because of weather deterioration.
- Matches may not be called for inclement weather earlier than 2 hours prior to the scheduled match time.
- The official weather suspension time is 30 minutes after the scheduled start time, unless both captains agree to declare a weather suspension sooner, or the home facility has deemed the courts unplayable. If a match is interrupted by inclement weather, players must wait a minimum of 30 minutes before calling the match and rescheduling, unless both captains agree that the courts will remain unplayable within that timeframe.
- Only captains, acting captains, or facilities may declare an inclement weather suspension or cancellation. All matches must be rescheduled.

FACILITY ISSUES

- **Court Issues:** If the courts for a scheduled match become unavailable because of an issue with the hosting facility, the home team must notify the opponent as soon as the issue is known, but no later than two (2) days prior to the match. Emergency issues must be communicated as soon as the captain is aware of the situation. If a team experiences a conflict of any kind, the home team may secure alternate courts within a reasonable distance of the original match site. Alternately, the opponent's courts may be used if available. The home team remains responsible for any facility/court fees incurred. Captains must email local play coordinator, with the opposing captain copied, so that the coordinator may assist in finding an alternate site and/or rescheduling the time/date for the match.
- **Facility Lights Out:** If a match is interrupted due to the facility closing early, lights going out, court time expiring, or any other facility issue that makes the courts unplayable or unavailable, the match will be treated as a match suspension and should be rescheduled in accordance with the rescheduling procedures.

USTA EVENTS

Championship Play: All championship play (local league playoffs **for your specific area**, Sectional and/or National championships) supersedes local league play. Players that are participating in the conflicting event may reschedule their local league match. It is preferred that these lines be rescheduled and played prior to the conflicting scheduled match, otherwise they are subject to the above rules regarding makeup matches. Captains should notify their opponents as soon as they know there is a conflict, but no less than 48 hours before the conflicted match. Each line made up because of conflicts with championship play **MUST** contain a player or players that participated in the conflicting event or the line(s) will be defaulted.

MATCH PROTOCOL

- **Courtesy Communication:** Home captains should contact their opposing team captain at least 48 hours prior to the match to verify match time, inform if warm-up courts will be available and provide any necessary instruction on facility attire rules, parking, etc.

- **Court Surface & Late Play:** If a home facility will need to stagger the start times of individual match lines, or if the home facility is using a mixture of court surfaces, the captain should notify the opposing team captain at least one week prior to the match and the visiting team captain will designate which lines will play late or on the alternate court surface.
- **Provisions:** Home teams must provide the balls (USTA approved, court appropriate). If the facility does not provide water, the home team must provide water for their visiting guests.
- **Line-ups:** Each team captain must complete a legible scorecard (printed from TennisLink is recommended) prior to match time, including the players' first and last names. Line-up cards are exchanged promptly at scheduled match time, or before, if all players are present. Captains should review and sign scorecards at the end of each match. Both captains are expected to keep a copy of the completed scorecard post-match to ensure correct reporting. See score entry.
- **Tardiness:** All players are expected to arrive prior to the scheduled match time. Any player(s) that is not on court within 15 minutes after the scheduled match time will be considered defaulted. The opposing team may agree to wait as a courtesy; however, they must determine how long they will wait, and that time **MUST** be recorded on both scoresheets and signed by the team captains or team representatives.
- **Warm-ups:** Players get a 10-minute warm-up when taking the court at scheduled match time. Late players (any time after official start time) will be allowed to join warm-ups in progress but will get no additional time.
- **Continuous Play:** Players are allowed 25 seconds between points, 90 seconds for changeovers and 120 seconds between sets. After the first game of each set, and during a tie-break game, play shall be continuous, and the players shall change ends without a rest.
- **Match Format:** All local league match formats are the best of three tiebreak sets with a 10-point tiebreak in lieu of a third set, unless otherwise stated.
- **Score Entry:** Match results must be entered within 48 hours, or before the last date of the league season, whichever comes first. Either captain can enter the scores, but correct entry is both captains' responsibility. Effort should be made to settle any disagreements between the team captains concerning scores prior to requesting any changes. Both captains (or acting captains) should verify and sign-off on the scores prior to leaving the courts when a match has completed to prevent errors. If a scorecard is disputed, the captain must contact the local play coordinator in writing to level the dispute. The opposing captain must be copied on all requests for score changes or player changes, and the request must include the match number in question. No changes can be made to a scorecard after the league season has ended. Line defaults are recorded at the lowest position, regardless of where they occurred on court. Captains must contact the Local Play Coordinator prior to recording a total team default in TennisLink.
- **Spectators:** Spectators, teaching professionals, and team members may not, at any time, inject themselves in a match. Home team captains are responsible for educating and controlling the environment at their facilities. Spectators must be courteous and considerate to the players on court and may not converse with any player during a match. Spectators must remain outside of the playing area and may not sit in the player's rest area. Home teams should designate areas used for rest during changeovers for players only. At the conclusion of a match, the participants from that match become spectators and, at the earliest opportunity, must remove themselves, and any personal belongings, from areas designated for players only. See FLORIDA 1.04E(4).

ADVANCEMENT/PLAYOFFS

- **Post Season:** Post-season play is determined by the Local Play Coordinator once schedules are established.
- **Playoffs:** Local playoff protocols, including necessity, dates, venues, and formats, will be announced prior to the commencement of the season via USTA Communication Center, email or text. Sectional and National championships dates are promptly published on ustaflorida.com as soon as they are established. Stated playoff dates may be changed to accommodate the grievance committee, if necessary.
- Once the teams advancing to a local league playoff have been determined, if any team cannot, or will not, participate in the playoff, the opposing team will be declared the winner and no playoff will be played.
- In the event that our area is able to send more than one team to Sectionals, as determined by the leagues committee, and those teams are from different flights, first place will be determined by game winning percentage for the purposes of receiving team prizes.
- **Playoff Advantages:** The home team for any playoff is determined by the game winning percentage from the Stats & Standings available on TennisLink. If the game winning percentage is the same for both teams, the qualifiers listed below will be used to determine the winner. Home team is responsible for any court fees. If the home courts are unavailable, the home team and/or Local Play Coordinator may secure a neutral facility or use the opposing team's courts. All playoffs will be held on a weekend during the daytime, unless otherwise stated. If, due to no fault of either team scheduled for a playoff, the playoff match is not held before the Sectional End of Local League Deadline date, the winner will be determined by the first of the following qualifiers that does so:
 1. Highest game winning percentage from their local league season
 2. Most wins at #1 doubles divided by #1 doubles played
 3. Most wins at #2 doubles divided by #2 doubles played

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Courtesy:** Courtesy does not trump regulations. Please remember that while courtesy and good sportsmanship are the cornerstones of league play, these USTA regulations are designed to keep play fair for all players and teams involved. A good deed done for one team may have an unintended negative consequence for another.
- **Communication:** When communicating, do not rely on telephone conversations and voicemail. Please be sure that you have communicated in writing via text or email. Follow-up telephone conversations and voicemails are a courtesy, but all agreements made between captains and coordinators must be in writing.
- **75/25 Rule:** If a team is notified that they are out of 75% at-level compliance, the captain must adjust their roster to be within compliance prior to playing the next scheduled match. Team matches played out of compliance post notification will result in a total team default.
- When a natural disaster happens, the Local Play Coordinator may override some local league rules in order to keep leagues running, including, but not limited to, extending makeup dates, expanding league rosters, and removing minimum court requirements.

REFUND POLICY

Registration Refunds: Once a player has registered for a team and has played a match, the player may not be removed from that team, nor will refunds or credits be issued. A player that has not played a match for the registered team may be removed from the roster upon request and issued a credit of the registration fee (we cannot refund or credit transaction fees charged by third parties). This credit will be attached to the player's USTA account and may be used toward another Florida league/team within a year from the date of issuance. Once a season has ended, a player may no longer be moved or refunded. Players must contact Local Play Coordinator for credits or player moves. If removing a player from the roster will put a team out of compliance with the 75/25 rule, the player cannot be removed until another player is ready to be added in order to keep the roster in compliance.