



2027 Championship Year Local Rules and Regulations Okaloosa, Walton and Bay Counties

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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 but may 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. Please consult the Local Play Coordinator (LPC) listed clarification.

SCHEDULING

- **Captain's Meetings:** Team Captains or a team representative are not required to attend their local captain's 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.
- **Roster Forms:** Roster forms are required prior to receiving a team number and must meet the required criteria.
- **Schedules:** Captains/Facilities will be asked to provide "blackout dates" prior to the scheduling process. The official schedule with match dates & times is published and posted on Tennis Link seven (7) days before match play begins. Captains are responsible for confirming court availability for their home matches. Captains will have three (3) days after scheduled publication to review and notify the Local Play Coordinator of any conflicts or issues. This includes any match time changes due to court availability. Changes to the schedule are always at the discretion of the Local Play Coordinator. Due to facility availability, it is possible that teams will not have equal home and away matches during a season.
- **Roster Limits:** Roster limits will not be imposed for any leagues. Players must be registered electronically via TennisLink on the team prior to playing a match. Any match played by a non-registered player will be defaulted.
- **Defaults:** Teams must play ALL matches scheduled. If a team defaults an entire match (defined as playing less than the majority of the scheduled individual match lines) for any reason, the team will be subject to the strict regulations regarding total team defaults. This can negatively impact the entire league.
- **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 to advance to Sectional and National play opportunities.
- **Player Additions:** Players may be added to the roster if at least 2 match-play opportunities are available for added players to play in the regular season (even if the original match dates have been rescheduled).

- **Local Play Coordinators** may seek feedback from captains and players in order to offer the best possible experience, but will 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. 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, conflicts with other USTA events, mutual captain agreement or prior approval by the Local Play Coordinator.

GENERAL POLICIES

- Any change to the league schedule requires Local Play Coordinator’s express written approval. Local Play Coordinators must be notified within 24 hours when a postponed, suspended, or rescheduled match occurs.
- It is expected that all matches will be played as scheduled. If a team experiences a conflict of any kind, the first option **must** be moved to the opponent’s courts, if available on the same date & time. A neutral facility **may** be agreed upon by both captains if neither facility is available at scheduled match time.
- No matches may be played, and no scores may be entered in Tennislink, after the league season has ended.
- When matches are cancelled or postponed for any reason, it is preferred that captains reschedule immediately, but matches must be rescheduled 48 hours post originally scheduled time. The agreed upon date must be emailed to the LPC immediately upon agreement with both captains included.
- If both captains agree, lineups for cancelled matches may be exchanged through the Local Play Coordinator by email. Within 24 hours of the cancelled match each captain will email the Local Play Coordinator their lineup and player’s contact information. The Local Play Coordinator will return the lineups jointly
- **The team captains must agree upon a makeup match within three (3) days of the original match date, with the home captain providing at least two (2) viable alternate dates and times.** All rescheduled matches must be played within two (2) weeks of the originally scheduled match date, or within seven (7) days of the last scheduled match, whichever comes first.
- 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 to complete the match. If either captain is unable to field any position on the rescheduled date and time, that position will be defaulted.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Only captains, acting captains, or facilities may declare an inclement weather cancellation. All matches must be rescheduled.
- Inclement weather situations considered for reschedule are rain, lightning, hurricane or tornado watch/warning, temperatures above 95 degrees, temperatures below 40 degrees, or any unsafe weather condition deemed by Whether captain or players on court unless indoor facilities are available.
- Matches may not be called for inclement weather more than one (1) hour prior to the scheduled match time.
- The official weather suspension time will be 30 minutes after the original starting 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 time frame.

FACILITY ISSUES

- **Court Issues:** If the courts for a scheduled match become unavailable because of an issue with the hosting facility, the home team should notify the opponent as soon as the issue is known. Emergency issues must be communicated as soon as the captain is aware of the situation. If courts are available at the visitor’s facility, or a neutral facility, the match must be played at the same time on the same day (refer to General Policies). If courts are not available at either facility at that time, the home team must follow the general reschedule policies. Captains should email the local play coordinator, with the opposing captain copied, so that the coordinator may assist in finding an alternate site and/or reschedule the time/date for the match.
- **Facility Lights Out:** If a match is interrupted due to the facility closing early, lights going out, or any other facility issue that makes the courts unplayable, the match will be treated as a match suspension reschedule and those procedures will apply.

USTA EVENTS

Championships Play: All championship play (local league playoffs, sectional and/or national championships) supersedes local league play. Teams that are participating in the conflicting event may reschedule their local league match. It is expected that these matches be rescheduled and played prior to the conflicting scheduled match, otherwise they are then subject to the above rules regarding makeup matches. Teams should notify their opponents as soon as they know there is a conflict, but no less than seven (7) days before the conflicted match. Matches made up because of conflicts with championship play MUST contain at least 2 players that participate in the conflicting event. A partial match must be played if only 2 or fewer players are participating in the Championship event.

MUTUAL CAPTAIN AGREEMENT

- **Captain Agreements:** Matches may be rescheduled by mutual captain agreement. Such matches must be agreed upon in writing at least 24 hours prior to a scheduled match with the Local Play Coordinator included in communication (refer to General Policies). To be courteous, teams requesting a reschedule should give as much notice as possible. The home captain is still responsible for contacting the city to release the court reservation.

MATCH PROTOCOL

- **Courtesy Communication:** Home captains must contact their opposing team captain prior to the match 24 hours to verify match time, inform if warm-up courts will be available and provide any necessary instruction on facility attire rules, parking, etc. It is considered poor sportsmanship to withhold information on known line defaults, and they should be disclosed as soon as they are a certainty.
- **Court Surface & Late Play:** If a home facility will need to have late lines or will use mixed surfaces, the captain should notify the opposing team captain at least one week prior to the match. If the home facility is using a mixture of court surfaces, 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).
- **Line-ups:** Each team captain must complete a legible scorecard (printed from TennisLink is recommended) prior to match time. This must include players' first, last names, NTRP level, and the positions played. Line-up cards are exchanged promptly at scheduled match time. At the conclusion of match, captains should review and sign scorecard at the end of 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 fifteen (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 record the time or they must wait indefinitely, if no time is agreed upon.
- **Warm-ups:** Players get a ten (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 in progress warm-up but will be granted no additional warm-up 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 must be continuous, and the players must 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. The Coman tiebreak procedure must be used for all tiebreaks.
- **Score Entry:** Match results must be entered within **48 hours** of the match being played by either team captain, 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, 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 in that match become spectators and, at the earliest opportunity, must remove themselves and any personal belongings from areas designated for players only.
- **Line Judges:** This local area will opt in to the use of line judges when requested by a player on court. Please refer to Addendum A at the end of this document for the role of a line judge and their guidelines.

ADVANCEMENT/PLAYOFFS

- **Post Season:** Post season play is determined by the Local Play Coordinator after season and 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/text. Sectional and National championships dates are promptly published on USTA Florida.com as soon as they are established.
- **Playoff Advantages:** Any playoff advantage is determined by Local Play Coordinator and they determine facility including surface(s), date and time.
- 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 procedures 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** 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.
- If a team is notified that they are out of compliance per Florida Section Regulation 1.04D(4)a, the captain must adjust their roster to be within compliance prior to playing the next scheduled match. Any individual match(es) played by players out of compliance will be deemed ineligible, disqualified, and scored as 6-0, 6-0 loss(es). Team matches played out of compliance post notification will result in a total team default.

REFUND POLICY

Registration Refunds: Once a player has registered for a team and has played a match, players may not be moved from a team, nor will refunds be issued. A player that has not played a match for the registered team may be moved from the roster upon the captain's or player's request to a "holding zone" to be used for future play, or they may request a refund. Once a season has ended, a player may no longer be moved or refunded. Players will have one year to use the held registration. Administrative registration fees are not refunded. **Contact Local Play Coordinator for refunds or player moves.**

ADDENDUM A - LINE JUDGES

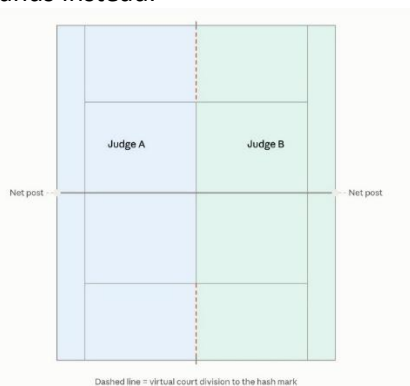
Line Judge Role

If, during a local league match, an irresolvable dispute arises between the players about the accuracy of calling the lines, any player may suspend play and request that line judges be present for the remainder of the match.

Line Judges are volunteers, not certified officials, whose sole responsibility is to assist with line calls. A line judge may be called in by any player on court, and each team may select one individual to serve as a line judge. Once selected, the judges' line calls are final and must be accepted by all players without argument.

Line Judge Guidelines

1. Only one player needs to request that line judges be used for the match.
2. A line judge must be a team captain (or acting captain), a player from either team, or a facility staff member. Two line judges are recommended when possible.
3. If line judges are requested at any point after the match's scheduled start time, players have up to five minutes to locate one. If a line judge cannot be found within that time, play must proceed without them.
4. Line judge duties, positioning, and calls:
 - Line judges only make calls when asked by a player — they never call a line on their own.
 - Each line judge stands at a net post (one judge per side).
 - Each line judge is responsible for their own half of the court: from the center line to the sideline nearest them, running the full length from net to baseline.
 - Exception: if a serve lands on or near the center line, both line judges make that call together.
 - A line judge's call is final and cannot be argued.
 - If both judges are asked about the same call and disagree with each other, the players' own call stands instead.



The diagram above shows how the court splits into each judge's zone: the solid center service line is a real court marking, and the dashed portion is the extension down to the hash mark that defines the boundary between the two judges' halves for the full length of the court.

2.5 NTRP level exception

At the 2.5 NTRP level only, line judges may also assist players with the mechanics of playing the match, in addition to their line judge duties. This can include helping keep score, confirming service order, and explaining how to play a tiebreaker. This additional assistance applies only at the 2.5 level and is subject to each county's specific local league rules regarding line judge use.