



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is playing travel soccer expensive?

We feel that our costs are the best in the area, considering the caliber of staff, training and game facilities, league fees, insurance, tournament play, etc. Heart of the City subsidizes approximately 75% of the cost per travel player compared to other travel soccer programs in Lake County. Costs are for the entire year and can be paid in installments. A year-long commitment is required.

Per the U.S. Soccer Federation, the 2018 national average to play travel soccer was \$2,500-5,000 per season. As a nonprofit organization, Heart of the City raises funds to offset as much of the actual program cost as possible so that youth in our community have the opportunity to play travel soccer.

Q: Is there a lot of travel in Travel Soccer?

During each season (fall & spring), each team will play 8 games in the fall and 8 games in the spring; half of these games are home games and half away. Our younger teams generally travel within a 10-20-mile radius for away games; our older teams generally travel between 10-30 miles radius for away games.

Q: What is the commitment to play with HOTC Elite?

Players U8 through U14 are committing to play with HOTC Elite for the Fall, Winter & Spring season. HS Girls are committing to the Fall & Winter seasons; HS Boys are committing to the Winter & Spring season.

*NOTE: once a player registers for the new season, it is the club's discretion as to whether we grant a player release, if a release is requested. We will NOT grant a player release without all fees paid in full.

Q: Does HOTC Elite have parents or team managers coaching the players? All of our teams have highly qualified, USSF licensed professional coaches who train and coach games. If there is a situation where a coach has a conflict with another team or cannot get to a training session/game, another staff coach will cover for them.

Q: Do your teams take part in winter training/games?

Yes, absolutely. We know that repetition is key in developing highly skilled soccer players, therefore we offer training - 2 sessions per team (U7-HS) and 10 games (U9-HS) during the winter season. Winter program is included in the year-round fees.

Q: Do your teams travel to out of state tournaments?

HOTC Elite high school teams will travel to college showcase tournaments where they can be seen by college scouts and improve their chances of being selected to play college soccer.



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Q: Do all players get playing time?

All players will get playing time, but this question has its variables: Playing time for our younger players will be more spread out. As players get older, all players will still get playing time, but more time on the field will be established based on the ability of your child, his or her commitment, work ethic, skill sets that suit certain functions, the team's positional needs, etc.

Q: Does HOTC Elite allow players to "play up" an age group?

HOTC Elite currently has some players "playing up" an age group for the whole season. Our policy on "playing up" is that the player must be of exceptional ability, be physically and mentally able to play up, and would developmentally benefit from this experience. It is a decision made by the Director of Coaching post tryouts. During the season, if a team is short on numbers due to injury, etc, then we may substitute a player from another team or an age group below to play up for certain games or tournaments.

Q: Can my son or daughter still play with HOTC Elite if they play other sports? We actually recommend younger children experience different sports. Unlike some other organizations, we believe that playing different sports is beneficial for a child's overall well-being, social skills and cognitive development. Your child can still play with HOTC Elite if they play other sports. However, an overload of sports can be stressful for a young athlete, due to the physical/mental demands of sports and time commitments required. These factors should be taken into consideration when making that decision.

Q: If my child has a conflict with his/her team's practice, can they attend another team's practice session?

HOTC Elite will allow your child to attend another team's session if a conflict occurs. It's important that your child is getting plenty of training time in order to develop their game. However, you **MUST** contact your team coach when a conflict arises, so the player, coach and Director of Coaching can find an alternative training opportunity.

Can HOTC Elite Players "guest play" with another club?

For league games, guest-playing with another club is **NOT** allowed by the leagues we play in. If any player is caught guest-playing for another club, they will be banned from participating in IYSA leagues. If an HOTC guest player is asked to play in a tournament by another club, the requesting club must contact DOC Thomas Cahue at thomas@hotcsoccer.org to formally ask consent. The final decision will be made by Thomas. **NOTE: all HOTC games, tournaments, training, events will always be given priority over guest-playing in tournaments with another club.**



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Q: If my son or daughter plays travel soccer but we opt out when the season starts, can we get a refund?

We budget for each team and the number of players on the roster to keep costs very reasonable. For this reason, no refund will be issued, unless there is a long term injury, illness or family relocation.

Q: What if I don't make a payment on time?

You must contact one of Heart of the City program administrators at our office if you're unable to make your payment for any reason (call 847-623-6200). Your account will be held for 5 business days before your player is marked ineligible for further travel play (until your account is brought into good standing once more).

Q: If I have a concern or issue, who do I go to?

If a complaint pertains to a team and/or coach, it is recommended you first try and talk to the coach to reach a mutual solution. If this cannot be achieved, then you may contact the Director of Team & Football Operations, Thomas Cahue.

Q: How does HOTC deal with unacceptable parent and player behavior?

All HOTC Elite parents and players must abide by the parent signed "Parent and Player Agreement" policy. The HOTC Zero Tolerance policy will be enforced if you violate the Parent/Player policy. All comments directed towards the field should be words of encouragement and praise, not criticism.

Q: What are the safety rules?

Suspend playing/practicing IMMEDIATELY if there is ANY LIGHTNING. Shin guards are mandatory (under socks) for games and practices. No jewelry may be worn for games or practices. Regular eye glasses without other forms of protection are not allowed - you must shield them in some way with goggles or something similar. Hoods may not be worn during play - they must be tucked inside the jersey. Jerseys must be tucked into shorts. If there is an injury on the field, we always err on the side of caution, and play will stop at change of possession while the injury is assessed. We will call an ambulance ANYTIME A HEAD INJURY IS SUSPECTED!

Q: I still have questions, who should I contact?

Letisia Gutierrez, Director of Sporting Operations - letisia@hotsoccer.org

Thomas Cahue, Director of Team & Football Operations - thomas@hotsoccer.org

Dean Smith, Sporting Director - dean@heartofthecitysports.org

You will receive a response within a 48-hour period.