

HOTC Elite FAQ

Parent-Friendly Guide | Updated February 24, 2026

This document answers common questions from families about HOTC Elite programming, expectations, and policies.

Program Basics

Q: What are the costs, and how does HOTC assist?

A: The HOTC Elite program costs are subsidized by over 90%, covering staff, facilities, league fees, tournaments, and more. Payments can be made in installments. Inquire about specific age group costs by contacting Letisia: letisia@hotcsoccer.org

Q: Is travel intensive?

A: Teams play 8 games in the spring and fall—half at home, half away. Winter games are all at one location. All teams also compete in tournaments. Travel ranges from 10–30 miles for away league games. Tournament play and higher-level competitions may require longer travel distances.

Q: What is the player commitment?

A: Players commit to fall, winter, and spring seasons. Soccer is a team sport—your attendance impacts the whole team. Players are expected to attend practices and games consistently as part of their commitment to the team.

Attendance expectation: 90% minimum attendance for practices and games.

Communication: Share unavoidable conflicts as soon as possible.

Why it matters: No-shows without good reason hurt planning, team performance, and your child's development.

Consequences for repeated unexcused absences may include: reduced playing time, sitting out games, and possible removal from the program.

You've committed to the full season—show up, be present, and be part of the team.

Q: Who are the coaches?

A: HOTC teams are coached by high-quality, vetted, USSF-licensed professionals. Substitute coaches cover sessions if conflicts arise, ensuring consistent, high-level training.

Q: What is HOTC's coaching philosophy?

A: We take a holistic approach focusing on technical, tactical, physical, and mental development while building confidence, resilience, and teamwork.

Playing Time & Participation

Q: What is the playing time policy?

A: Playing time is essential for development. Guidelines:

Minimum Playing Time

- U8–U12: 40% minimum
- U13–U19: 30% minimum

Reasons for reduced playing time may include:

- Unexcused absences
- Poor attitude or effort
- Fitness or injury limitations

Q: Can players “play up” an age group?

A: Yes. This decision is made by the Director of Coaching (DOC) based on ability and development needs.

Q: Can players play other sports?

A: Yes. However, players must manage their schedule to ensure proper soccer development and avoid burnout.

Q: Can players attend other team sessions?

A: Yes, with communication and approval from their coach.

Q: Can players guest-play with other clubs?

A: Not for league games. Tournament guest play requires Director of Coaching approval. HOTC events always take priority.

Youth Development & College Pathway

Q: What is the Youth Development & Support (YDS) program?

A: YDS includes:

- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)
- College visits
- Enrichment trips
- Family engagement
- Individual development planning

These programs support leadership, academic success, and personal growth.

Q: What is the process of getting recruited to play college soccer?

A: HOTC provides a comprehensive college recruitment plan for our high school players. This includes:

- Creating individual player profiles and highlight videos
- Hosting College Soccer ID events
- Competing in showcase tournaments
- Direct outreach and placement support through our college recruitment advisor

In 2025, 16 of our 30 graduating seniors were recruited to play college soccer, many receiving scholarships.

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

A: Yes. HOTC Elite high school teams compete in state competitions, showcase tournaments, and College Soccer ID events as part of the college recruitment pathway.

Fall 2026 Age Group Update

Q: What age group changes are happening in Fall 2026?

A: U.S. Soccer is changing age group formation from birth year to school year, aligning teams with grade level. This will take effect beginning Fall 2026. Please reference the new age group chart here: illinoisyouthsoccer.org/fall-2026-age-group-change

Q: How will this change benefit my child?

A: This change allows players to be placed with classmates and friends from school, making the experience more enjoyable and socially connected. It strengthens friendships, improves team chemistry, and supports confidence and overall development.

Logistics, Communication & Policies

Q: Are uniforms and training apparel mandatory?

A: Yes. All players must purchase required uniform and training gear.

Q: How are schedules and updates communicated?

A: Through the Sprocket app.

Q: Are credits and refunds offered?

A: Credits or prorated refunds are only provided for long-term injury, illness, or relocation.

Q: What happens if I miss a payment?

A: Contact administrators within 5 days to avoid ineligibility.

Q: Who do I contact for concerns about my child's development?

A: Start with the coach. If unresolved, contact the Director of Coaching.

Q: How does HOTC handle parent and player behavior issues?

A: HOTC enforces a zero-tolerance policy. Violations may result in suspension or removal.

Q: What are the safety rules?

A: We prioritize field safety, weather protocols, proper equipment, and injury prevention.

Contacts

Q: Who can I contact for questions?

A: **Letisia Gutierrez** — Director of Sporting Operations
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