



US Youth Soccer National Office  
9220 World Cup Way  
Frisco, TX 75033

March 31, 2020

To: State Association Presidents, ED/CEOs,  
USYS Board Members  
Committee/Advisory Chairs,  
USYS National Staff

From: Dr. Pete Zopfi – USYS Chair  
Skip Gilbert – USYS CEO

Re: USYS Programming and Advisory Notice

While millions of medical personnel around the world are doing everything possible to contain the COVID-19 virus, all of us at USYS are working hard to ensure the health and wellness of our entire USYS Family. As the largest and most influential youth sport organization in the country, we take that responsibility very seriously.

Several weeks ago we joined with other national sport organizations to provide health and safety guidelines, as well as lead from the front by proclaiming a national time-out for our sport. At that time we announced a suspension of our activities through April 15<sup>th</sup>. That date served as a benchmark for our 55 State Associations to review conditions within their geographic region and to act accordingly.

We said at that time that we would update this programming suspension and today's notice will likely be disappointing to many of you. As of today, we have decided to push back our return to activity date for our US Youth Soccer Conferences to May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. This will allow all 55 State Associations to review the impact of COVID-19 on their members and make their own informed decisions on a return-to-play date. In addition, USYS is cancelling the 2020 Presidents Cup, our 2020 National Championships and all of the regional competitions leading up to those two events.

Our decision embraces four core priorities:

- 1) Financial Impact to Families - COVID-19 is likely to have a devastating financial impact on many USYS families. As a result, many teams are unlikely to attend or attend with reduced rosters. At this time, we feel it would be unfair to place that additional burden on USYS families in need.
- 2) Stress on Families - If it were possible, however unlikely, that we could return to play in May, many families will still be hesitant to travel on an airplane or stay in a hotel. Again, we do not want to place that additional burden on our USYS families.
- 3) Integrity of USYS Competitions - If teams that would normally qualify for a Championship do not have the opportunity because of the impact of COVID-19, is it really a Championship? We must ensure that every club within the USYS Family has an equal opportunity to succeed and if they



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don't, we diminish the integrity and meaning of the Championship. As of today, many States will not be able to complete their State Cups in time to qualify for Regionals, thus eliminating all of their potential teams from qualification.

- 4) Focus on Local USYS Leagues and Communities - many soccer clubs and their employed coaches survive on registration fees. At a time where every community will be struggling to find fields to start and complete even a part of their spring schedule, our focus should be on those local leagues to bring our communities back together through sport, not distracted by a national tournament. 2020 must be about coming back together, not just winning.

We can imagine the disappointment many players, coaches and families will feel. Not being able to join their team in a run for the Cup and fulfill their dreams and goals is extremely hard to fathom, especially for our oldest players hoping to make one last run at hoisting the National Championship Cup. We are also acutely aware of those older players hoping these competitions could support their collegiate recruiting efforts. While there are no words to ease the disappointment, some day when they think about why the decision was made, they will hopefully come to agree that this was the right call.

Looking ahead, we will reassess our May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 return-to-play date and provide another update by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

On behalf of the USYS National Headquarters staff, Board of Directors, Committees, 55 State Associations and the many thousands of volunteers that are so generous with their time, thank you to all of you for helping to make soccer the preeminent sport in the United States. Be safe, stay healthy and since you all have a soccer ball at home, try to also have some fun.

We Are Youth Soccer – Thank You.