



## ICSF Columbus FC

# Technical & Player Development Manual

### Index

1. Document Control
2. Purpose
3. Technical Philosophy (The ICSF Columbus FC Way)
4. Player Development Pathway
5. Program Delivery Standards
6. Technical Curriculum Framework
7. Player Pathway Governance & Decision-Making Framework
8. Coaching Framework (Integration with Coach Strategy)
9. Governance Structure
10. Child Safeguarding & Code of Conduct
11. Access, Inclusion & Barrier Reduction
12. Competitive Structure
13. Oversight & Continuous Improvement
14. Final Clause

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## 1. Document Control

Club:	ICSF Columbus FC
Type:	Technical & Player Development Manual
Purpose:	MA-1 Club Licensing Compliance Document
Approved By:	Executive Director, Head Coach & Board of Directors
Governance Oversight:	Executive Director & Head Coach
Review Cycle:	Annual or as required under BC Soccer / Canada Soccer updates

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## 2. Purpose

This Technical Manual defines the technical philosophy, player development framework, coaching structure, and operational standards of ICSF Columbus FC.

It ensures alignment with:

- Canada Soccer Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) Model
- Canada Soccer Club Licensing System (MA-1)
- BC Soccer policies, standards, and competition structures
- Safe Sport and safeguarding requirements

This document is binding for all Club technical operations.

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## 3. Technical Philosophy (The ICSF Columbus FC Way)

### 3.1 Definition

The ICSF Columbus FC Way is the Club's unified technical and cultural philosophy guiding all player development, coaching behaviour, and training environments.

It is an evolution of the original ICSF Way and is formally adopted as the Club-wide standard.

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## 3.2 Core Technical Principles

All programs must adhere to the following principles:

1. **Player Development First**  
Long-term development takes priority over short-term results.
2. **Technical Foundation Before Tactical Complexity**  
Ball mastery and technique are the foundation of all learning.
3. **Small-Sided Game Learning Model**  
Player development is maximized in small-sided environments.
4. **Age-Appropriate Design (LTPD Alignment)**  
Training and competition must reflect developmental stage.
5. **Individual Development Within Team Context**  
Players are developed as individuals first, within team structures.
6. **Enjoyment and Retention**  
Positive experience is essential to lifelong participation.
7. **Inclusive Entry at Grassroots Level**  
At the U6–U10 (MicroFootie and Minis) stage, participation is fully open and inclusive, with no selection, exclusion, or ability-based grouping applied at the point of program entry. All players are supported within the same learning environment in alignment with Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) principles.

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## 4. Player Development Pathway

ICSF Columbus FC operates a structured player pathway aligned with Canada Soccer LTPD and BC Soccer standards. The pathway ensures age-appropriate development, non-linear progression, and consistent technical delivery across all stages.

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### 4.1 Grassroots (U4–U7) – MicroFootie Program

Programs: Early Kickers / MicroFootie / Extra Kicks

Focus:

- Physical literacy and movement development
- Ball familiarity and comfort

- Fun, engagement, and participation
- Non-competitive learning environment
- Equal participation opportunities

MicroFootie is the Club's entry-level development program and is fully aligned with Canada Soccer Grassroots standards.

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#### 4.2 Foundation (U8–U10) – Minis Program

Focus:

- Technical repetition and ball mastery
  - Introduction to structured training environments
  - Small-sided game development (3v3–7v7)
  - Exposure to multiple positions
  - Equal and inclusive participation model
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#### 4.3 Development (U11–U13)

Focus:

- Introduction of developmental streaming (non-permanent groupings)
  - Tactical awareness and decision-making
  - Increased game understanding under pressure
  - Individual player evaluation and progression pathways
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#### 4.4 Competitive Youth (U14–U18)

Focus:

- Competitive league environments
- Tactical and physical development integration
- Performance accountability in structured competition

- Leadership and resilience development
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#### 4.5 Supplemental Programs

- Academy Training Centres (ATC)
  - Skills development programs
  - Camps and technical clinics
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#### 4.6 Soccer for Life

The Club supports lifelong participation through:

- Adult/senior soccer pathways
  - Coaching education pathways
  - Referee development pathways
  - Volunteer and leadership opportunities
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#### 5. Program Delivery Standards

All programs must ensure:

- Age-appropriate curriculum delivery
  - Minimum two training components per week (where applicable)
  - Use of small-sided game methodology
  - Structured technical progression
  - Safe, inclusive, and positive environments
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#### 6. Technical Curriculum Framework

Training must include:

1. Physical Literacy
  - Movement skills

- Coordination
  - Agility and balance
  - 2. Technical Development
    - Ball mastery
    - Passing
    - Receiving
    - Dribbling
    - Striking
  - 3. Skill Acquisition
    - Technical execution under pressure
    - Game-realistic repetition
  - 4. Small-Sided Games
    - Decision-making
    - Spatial awareness
    - Transition play
  - 5. Soccer Intelligence
    - Tactical awareness
    - Game understanding
    - Problem-solving
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## 7. Player Pathway Governance & Decision-Making Framework

This section defines how player placement, grouping, and progression decisions are made within ICSF Columbus FC. This framework ensures all player development decisions are consistent, documented, and aligned with Canada Soccer MA-1 licensing standards.

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## 7.1 Decision-Making Authority (WHO MAKES DECISIONS)

All player placement and movement decisions are made through a structured technical governance model:

- **Head Coach (Technical Authority)**  
Responsible for final technical decisions on player placement, streaming, and progression within the Club Game Model.
  - **Grassroots Program Lead**  
Responsible for implementation oversight, player monitoring, coach feedback collection, and ensuring consistency across age groups.
  - **Coaching Staff (Field-Based Input)**  
Provide ongoing observational feedback based on training and game environments.
  - **Executive Director (Oversight Level)**  
Ensures compliance with Club policy, MA-1 standards, and safeguarding alignment. Does not override technical placement decisions.
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## 7.2 How Player Placement Decisions Are Made

Player placement and movement decisions are based on a continuous observation model rather than single-session evaluation.

At U6–U10 (MicroFootie and Minis), participation is open and inclusive, with no selection, exclusion, or ability-based grouping applied at the program entry level.

Decisions are made using:

- Longitudinal coach observation (training + game environments)
- Technical ability (ball mastery, execution under pressure)
- Tactical understanding (age-appropriate decision-making)
- Engagement, effort, and learning behaviour
- Developmental readiness relative to LTPD stage
- Need for either increased challenge or additional support

All placement decisions are also reviewed against Safe Sport principles to ensure transparency, fairness, and appropriate communication standards.

At U11–U13, developmental streaming may occur to ensure appropriate challenge levels while maintaining fluid movement between groups.

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### 7.3 Communication of Decisions to Players & Parents

All player placement decisions are communicated in a structured and development-focused manner.

Communication includes:

- Clear explanation of developmental rationale
- Identification of current strengths and focus areas
- Description of how the placement supports long-term development
- Reinforcement that movement between groups is expected and normal

Conversations are delivered by coaching staff and supported by the Grassroots Program Lead where required.

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## 8. Coaching Framework (Integration with Coach Strategy)

All coaching operations are governed by the Club Coach Strategy and must align with this Manual.

### 8.1 Coaching Requirements

All coaches must:

- Hold appropriate BC Soccer / Canada Soccer certification
  - Complete Respect in Sport training
  - Pass Criminal Record Checks
  - Comply with Safe Sport requirements
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### 8.2 Coaching Responsibilities

Coaches must:

- Deliver curriculum as prescribed

- Ensure player safety at all times
  - Promote positive learning environments
  - Adhere to Club Code of Conduct
  - Support long-term player development
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## 9. Governance Structure

### 9.1 Executive Director

Responsible for:

- Club operations and strategy
  - Financial oversight
  - Staff management
  - External relations
  - Board reporting and governance compliance
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### 9.2 Head Coach

Responsible for:

- Technical consistency across all programs
  - Coach development and evaluation
  - Player pathway implementation
  - Compliance with BC Soccer / Canada Soccer standards
  - Reporting to Executive Director and Board
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### 9.3 Grassroots Program Lead

Responsible for:

- Delivery of grassroots programs (U4–U18 foundation stages)
- Curriculum implementation

- Coach support and mentoring
  - Program monitoring and reporting
  - Inclusion and accessibility initiatives
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## 10. Child Safeguarding & Code of Conduct

ICSF Columbus FC adopts a zero-tolerance safeguarding framework.

### 10.1 Standards

All participants must:

- Follow Safe Sport policies
  - Treat all individuals with dignity and respect
  - Maintain professional boundaries
  - Avoid discrimination, harassment, or abuse
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### 10.2 Persons in Authority

Must:

- Maintain appropriate boundaries with minors
  - Avoid private or unsupervised interactions
  - Ensure transparency in all communications
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### 10.3 Prohibited Conduct

Strictly prohibited:

- Abuse or harassment
- Grooming behaviour
- Inappropriate communication with minors
- Unsanctioned physical contact
- Breach of Safe Sport guidelines

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## 10.4 Reporting

All concerns must be reported to:

- Executive Director
- BC Soccer / Canada Soccer authorities where required
- Law enforcement or child protection agencies where applicable

All reports are treated seriously and confidentially.

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## 11. Access, Inclusion & Barrier Reduction

ICSF Columbus FC is committed to equitable access.

Supported mechanisms include:

- KidSport financial assistance
- Canadian Tire Jumpstart program
- Flexible payment structures (where feasible)
- Inclusive program design
- Confidential financial support processes

No participant is excluded based on financial circumstances.

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## 12. Competitive Structure

The Club supports:

- BC Soccer league participation
- Cascadia League participation
- Provincial competition pathways
- Non-linear player movement between levels

Competition is formally recognized as a developmental environment and must not be used as a primary mechanism for player selection, ranking, or exclusion prior to U14.

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### 13. Oversight & Continuous Improvement

This Manual is reviewed:

- Annually (minimum)
- Upon changes to BC Soccer / Canada Soccer policy
- Upon MA-1 licensing updates

Oversight is jointly held by:

- Executive Director
  - Head Coach
  - Board of Directors
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### 14. Final Clause

ICSF Columbus FC is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and development-driven soccer environment. This Technical Manual represents the official operational and philosophical standard for all Club activities.

All staff, coaches, volunteers, and participants are required to adhere to this Manual as a condition of involvement with the Club.

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