



What is changing?

Starting with the 2026-27 season, youth soccer will move from the current calendar (January-December) to a seasonal year (August-July) for age grouping

Current System: Birth year January 1 – December 31

New System: Seasonal-year August 1 – July 31

Is This a Massapequa SC Decision?

No, this is a US Soccer change impacting leagues and clubs unilaterally across the country. MSC will follow the seasonal-year age group formation cycle in accordance with national standards and our regional governing bodies (ENYSA, LIJSL) as well as other competition organizations (EDP, USL Youth) that our teams participate in.

Why is this change happening?

US Soccer along with its' three largest youth affiliates, U.S. Youth Soccer, US Club Soccer and AYSO, mutually agreed to this change based on extensive research and feedback and aims to:

- Better align soccer participation with school-year age groupings
- Reduce “trapped’ players - whereas the birth year model created situations where players remain in middle school while teammates move on, or stay on teams after seniors’ graduate high school, resulting in unstable rosters, with often no place for that player(s) to continue to participate

When does this change take place?

The new August 1 – July 31 system starts with 2026-2027 seasonal year (Fall 2026 tryouts and registration).

What MSC Programs Are Involved in This Change?

Effective Fall '26, All MSC Programs and activities (Developmental-CORE, Recreational-InterLeague, Competitive- Classic/Academy/Elite/USL Y will follow the Seasonal-year matrix.

Will my child have to repeat or skip an age group?

Most players will simply shift into the new grouping without repeating or skipping a full year of soccer. For example, a player born in September who is currently on a “younger” birth year team will likely join classmates they already know from the schools. The August 1st cut-off reduces not only the trapped player effect, but it also reduces the number of “force-ups,” a term referring to players in a younger soccer age group but older school year who must play up an age group to be with their school-year friends.

Can my child play up an age group?

We prefer players to continue to play in the appropriate age group. Specific situations will be reviewed by the Technical Staff.

My child has a late birthday and has struggled with being the youngest, will this help?

Yes! The new age alignment is designed to reduce the “trapped player” issues that have impacted many families under the old system. Players will benefit from a system that prioritizes player development, friendships and long-term enjoyment of the game.

