



## 2021 CHICAGO DISTRICT LEAGUE RULES AND PROCEDURES – LEAGUE OVERVIEW

Current USTA League regulations, *Friend at Court*, *The Code*, USTA Midwest Standing Orders, and the following local League rules and procedures apply. This document is one of 4 that describe rules and procedures for USTA Adult League Play in the Chicago District. *Complete rules and procedures for USTA Adult League Play in the Chicago District consist of 4 parts: League Overview, Captain's Information, Team Match Information, and Timed Match Procedures.*

*Note: Comments in red reflect significant changes to 2020 rules. Comments in green reflect recent clarifications of the rules.*

### I. LEAGUE OVERVIEW

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#### A. USTA League Description

- a. USTA League Tennis provides adult recreational tennis Players throughout the Chicago District (Cook, Lake, and DuPage counties) with the opportunity to compete against Players of similar ability levels as part of a Team. League play is for Players ages 18 & Over and are largely organized according to the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) by age group.
- b. The USTA League Program and its policies are governed by the USTA League Committee appointed by the President of the USTA/Chicago District Tennis Association (CDTA) and subject to the control and direction of the USTA/CDTA Board of Directors.
- c. The USTA/CDTA District League Coordinator(s), under the employ of the USTA/CDTA is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the USTA League Program including the interpretation of the USTA League Regulations.
- d. All Players participating in the USTA League Program, as a condition of their participation, agree to abide by and be bound by USTA League Regulations, the USTA/Midwest Section Standing Orders, the USTA/CDTA USTA League Regulations and Procedures and the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship.

#### B. Progression

- a. Top Teams from local Men's and Women's 18 & Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over and Mixed 18 & Over and 40 & Over Leagues earn the chance to compete in District and/or Sectional championships, while the winners of Sectionals advance to annual USTA League National Championships. Top Teams from 65 & Over, Tri-Level (three lines of different NTRP levels), and Combo Leagues (pairing Players of different NTRP levels in doubles) can progress to Invitationals that can vary from year to year.

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### C. Championship Year

- a. USTA League play is run across the country according to a Championship Year that begins January 1 through December 31 and may include an Early Start League (ESL) season which is played in the Fall of the preceding year. CDTA provides an Early Start League season. Therefore, play in the Championship Year generally begins in September and concludes the following August for Men’s and Women’s 18 & Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over and Mixed 18 & Over and 40 & Over Leagues. Combo, Tri-Level, and 65 & Over Leagues follow a different calendar schedule revolving around the date of progressive Invitational tournaments.

### D. Chicago District League Offerings

- a. CDTA strives to offer a variety of League options for all Players. League play is organized by CDTA; but, Team Matches are hosted by clubs and facilities.
- b. While CDTA’s goal is to offer as much League play as possible, court capacity at facilities is limited. As such, from Season to Season, CDTA may not be able to offer all levels and options of League play.
- c. **Host facilities MUST be located within CDTA’s geographic boundaries (Cook, Lake, and DuPage counties).** A Facility hosting USTA League Matches shall have courts in good, playable, and safe condition and may be verified by the District League Coordinator (DLC).
- d. Generally, Leagues are organized by Season and time/day of play as well as by gender, NTRP level, and age as shown on the Table 1 below. Captains and Players intending to play within the Leagues below should be prepared to play during the times indicated.

**Table 1**

Season	Time/Day of Play	Leagues Offered
Early Start League/Fall Combo	Friday – 7:30 p.m. earliest start; 8:00 p.m. latest start Saturday - 9:00 a.m. earliest start; 8:00 p.m. latest start Sunday - 9:00 a.m. earliest start; 7:00 p.m. latest start	18&Over – Weekend 40&Over – Weekend 55&Over – Weekend 65&Over – Weekend 18&Over Mixed – Weekend 40&Over Mixed – Weekend Fall Combo – Weekend Tri-Level – Weekend
	<b>Monday &amp; Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. earliest start; 2:00 p.m. latest start</b>	<b>18&amp;Over – Weekday 40&amp;Over – Weekday 55&amp;Over – Weekday 65&amp;Over – Weekday</b>
	<b>Monday-Friday – 6:00 a.m. earliest start; 8:00 a.m. latest start</b>	<b>18 &amp;Over – Early Bird 40 &amp;Over – Early Bird 55 &amp;Over – Early Bird 65&amp;Over – Early Bird</b>
Winter	Friday – 7:30 p.m. earliest start; 8:00 p.m. latest start Saturday - 9:00 a.m. earliest start; 8:00 p.m. latest start Sunday - 9:00 a.m. earliest start; 7:00 p.m. latest start	18&Over – Weekend 40&Over – Weekend 55&Over – Weekend

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		65&Over – Weekend 18&Over Mixed – Weekend 40&Over Mixed – Weekend Combo – Weekend Tri-Level – Weekend
	Monday & Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. earliest start; 2:00 p.m. latest start	18&Over – Weekday 40&Over – Weekday 55&Over – Weekday 65&Over – Weekday
	Monday-Friday – 6:00 a.m. earliest start; 8:00 a.m. latest start	18 &Over – Early Bird 40 &Over – Early Bird 55 &Over – Early Bird 65&Over – Early Bird
Summer (indoors or outdoors with lights; no evening play is allowed on courts without lights on a weekday)	Monday-Thursday - 6:30 p.m. earliest start; 7:30 p.m. latest start* Friday - 7:30 p.m. earliest start; 8:00 p.m. latest start Saturday/Sunday - 9:00 a.m. earliest start; 5:00 p.m. latest start if outdoors without lights; 7:00 p.m. latest start if indoors or outdoors with lights	18&Over – Weekend 40&Over – Weekend 55&Over – Weekend 65&Over – Weekend 18&Over Mixed – Weekend 40&Over Mixed – Weekend Combo – Weekend Tri-Level – Weekend
	Monday & Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. earliest start; 2:00 p.m. latest start	18&Over – Weekday 40&Over – Weekday 55&Over – Weekday 65&Over – Weekday

\*A Home Team with a 6:30 p.m. start time shall accommodate, if possible, the request of a Visiting Team to change the start time to 7:00.

### E. Chicago District League Format & Team Composition

- a. The table below outlines League types in the Chicago District and required Team composition of each.

**Table 2**

League		Flight	Court Format	Minimum Number of Registered Players*
Adult 18 & Over	Women	2.5, 5.0	1 - Singles 2 - Doubles	5 (at level)
	Women ESL & Winter	3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5	1 – Singles 3 - Doubles	8 (at level)
	Men (all Seasons) & Women (Summer only)	3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5	2 - Singles 3 - Doubles	8 (at level)
Adult 40 & Over	Women	3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5	1 - Singles 3 - Doubles	7 (at level)
	Men**	3.0 3.5, 4.0, 4.5	1 - Singles 3 - Doubles	7 (at level)
Adult 55 & Over (Men & Women)		6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	3 - Doubles	6

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Adult 65 & Over (Men & Women)	6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	3 - Doubles	6
Mixed 18 & Over	6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0	3 - Doubles	3 Men 3 Women
Mixed 40 & Over	6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	3 - Doubles	3 Men 3 Women
Combo (Men, Women & Mixed)	6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5	3 - Doubles	6
Tri-Level (Men, Women & Mixed)	3.0/3.5/4.0 3.5/4.0/4.5	3 – Doubles	6

Please note that Leagues have specific NTRP requirements such as minimum NTRP, maximum rating level differences for Mixed Teams, etc. Please review national rules for more info on NTRP regulations or contact your District League Coordinator with questions. *Of note from National for 2021 is the elimination of all + (plus) Leagues. 5.0+ and 40&Over 4.5+ Leagues are no longer National Championship programs. National Championships in the Adult 18&Over age group will be held at the 5.0 level. National Championships in the Adult 40&Over age group will be held at the 4.5 level.*

*\*Minimum # of Players mandated by USTA National rules; local CDTA rules require the minimum # to also be at the level of play (i.e., if a minimum of 8 Players are required to form a 3.5 Team under National rules, in the Chicago District, those 8 Players must be at the 3.5 level). In the Chicago District, the rules require the minimum number of at-level Players by the start of the Season. If the Team does not meet the above requirements by the start date of the Season as reflected on TennisLink, it will be removed from the League.*

*\*\*While the Men's 40 & Over format has been 2 Singles, 3 Doubles, as of Summer 2020, the format was changed to align with the National format of 1 Singles and 3 Doubles.*

### F. Playing in Multiple Leagues

- a. Players can play on more than one Team as long as the Teams are not competing in the same Flight. Note that scheduling conflicts are more likely when Players are on multiple Teams and CDTA can only avoid scheduling conflicts within individual Flights.
- b. If any Player is on multiple Teams in different Districts in the same division and level that advance and meet in post-Season play (play-offs and championships), the Player will have to declare on which Team they will play.

### G. Code of Conduct

- a. The “Code of Conduct” found in “Friend at Court” will apply for all Matches conducted without officials. “Friend at Court” is the USTA handbook of tennis rules and regulations.
- b. Local League Matches are unofficiated. Every Player should be familiar with The Code, the Players’ Guide to Fair Play and all Matches should be played by its principles.

### H. Season Dates

- a. Start and end dates for each League Season are determined by the CDTA District League Coordinator (DLC) and Adult League Committee (ALC).
- b. Season dates can be found on the CDTA League calendar which is posted on the CDTA website and on TennisLink.

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- c. All Matches should be played within the Season dates.
- d. Generally, CDTA League Seasons are:
  - Early Start League – September through December
  - Fall Combo – September through December
  - Winter – January through April
  - Summer – May through August

### I. Team Applications

- a. Team applications are submitted by Captains who coordinate with host clubs to secure court time for Home Matches and confirm Match fees at the Facility. The Team application can be found on the CDTA website.
- b. Each Team must have a Captain or Co-Captain who will be a registered Player on the Team.
- c. Upon receipt of Team applications, the DLC will determine which Leagues will have enough Teams to be valid and will arrange Teams into Flights, as necessary, and begin scheduling Matches.

### J. Registration

- a. Once Teams have been confirmed, Players can begin registering starting on the registration open date.
- b. To facilitate optimal communication, each Team must have a Captain or Co-Captain as a registered Player.
- c. Captains will provide a Team number that Players will use to register for the correct Team.
- d. Registration open and close dates will be listed on the CDTA League calendar and on TennisLink.
- e. Registration will close for all Players on TennisLink 2 weeks prior to the end of the Season; however, computer-rated (“C”) Players may register through the last date of each Season but must contact the DLC for registration help during the final 2 weeks of each Season.
- f. Players must register on a Team prior to playing in a Match. The DLC will declare ineligible any Player who is not registered on a Team prior to participation in a League Match. Any Matches played by an ineligible Player will be recorded as wins for the opposing team. The scores will be maintained as played in TennisLink for ratings purposes.
- g. In the event of system problems with TennisLink, the DLC may allow a Player to play prior to registration. Approval by the DLC must be received prior to the League Match.

### K. Injury During Match Play

- a. During Match play, a medical timeout period of 3 minutes is allowed for each injury, after which the injured Player shall either continue or retire (see Friend at Court Table 13, page 98).
- b. If the injured Player chooses to retire, the Match shall be awarded to his/her opponent. Scores should be entered in TennisLink for all completed games exactly as they stood at the time of the retirement. Select “Retired” instead of “Complete” for the match status in TennisLink.

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### L. Match Fees

- a. Match fees are set by host facilities.
- b. Payment of the per player match fees is the responsibility of the participating individuals from both Teams.

### M. Balls

- a. Balls for matches are provided by the Home Team.

### N. Court Surfaces

- a. If a Team Match is played at a Facility which will use different surfaces, for example, hard and clay courts, the Visiting Captain will decide the placement of the Teams on the courts.

### O. Local Play-Offs & Championships

- a. CDTA District Championships will consist of competition between the Flight winners from each Season. Flights with Sub-Flights have play-offs at the close of each Season. Winners of CDTA District Championships shall be entitled to advance to Illinois State Championships (if applicable).
- b. In the event that a League winner chooses to default, not compete in, or is unable to play in the Flight Playoffs or District Championship, the next Team in line respectively in that League Season that is able to compete will be asked to participate in the championship.
- c. Each Team that wins their Flight will be responsible for paying the applicable CDTA District Championship Team fee.
- d. Any Team that wins more than one season has to choose which Team they will bring to play-offs.

### P. Sportsmanship

- a. All Players should adhere to “The Code” and demonstrate good sportsmanship according to the following guidelines. Any Player participating in USTA League Play is expected to demonstrate awareness of the following guidelines.
  - i. Points played in good faith stand.
  - ii. Give your opponent benefit of the doubt on all calls.
  - iii. A ball that is 99% out is 100% in.
  - iv. Accept defeat graciously.
  - v. Shake hands or tap racquets at the end of the Match. Both gestures confirm an agreement that the Match was played in good faith and the Match is binding.
  - vi. Tennis is a game that requires cooperation and courtesy from all participants. Make Matches fun by praising your opponent's good shots.
  - vii. Treat all points the same regardless of their importance.
  - viii. Any issue pertaining to a Match can only be resolved by the Players involved in that Match. Outside interaction could be considered “interruption of play.”
- b. Bullying and harassment are prohibited by the USTA and CDTA, including in Adult League play.
- c. Local League Matches are unofficiated. Fairness in line calling and keep score lies at the very heart of the game and of USTA League competition.