

2026 USTA Chicago – District League Rules and Procedures

Current USTA League regulations, Friend at Court, The Code, USTA Midwest Standing Orders, and the following local league rules and procedures apply to all adult leagues. The USTA League Suspension Point System will be applied to matters of conduct.

Note: Items in red reflect changes/clarifications to 2025 rules.

1) 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 is largely organized according to the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) and 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 (hereafter referred to as USTA Chicago) and subject to the control and direction of the USTA/USTA Chicago Board of Directors.
- c) The USTA/USTA Chicago District League Coordinator(s), under the employ of the USTA/USTA Chicago 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/USTA Chicago District League Rules and Procedures and the standards of good conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship.

2) Progression

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, State and/or Sectional Championships, while the winners of Sectionals advance to annual USTA League National Championships. Top teams from 65 & Over, Mixed 55 & Over, Tri-Level (three lines of different NTRP levels), and Combo Leagues (pairing players of different NTRP levels in doubles) can progress to Invitational tournaments that can vary from year to year.

3) Championship Year

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. USTA Chicago provides an Early Start League Season. Therefore, play in the Championship Year generally begins in September and concludes the following August to September for Men's and Women's 18 & Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over, Mixed 18 & Over and 40 & Over Leagues. Combo, Mixed 55 & Over, Tri-Level, and 65 & Over Leagues follow a different calendar schedule revolving around the date of progressive Invitational tournaments.

4) Chicago District League Offerings

- a) USTA Chicago strives to offer a variety of League options for all players. League play is organized by USTA Chicago. Team matches are hosted by clubs and facilities.
- b) While USTA Chicago's goal is to offer as much league play as possible, court capacity at facilities is limited. As such, from season to season, USTA Chicago may not be able to offer all levels and options of league play.
- c) Host facilities MUST be located within USTA Chicago'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 age, by gender, and NTRP level, as shown on 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	Friday – 7:00 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 (ESL) 40&Over – Weekend (ESL) 55&Over – Weekend (ESL) 18&Over Mixed – Weekend (ESL) 40&Over Mixed – Weekend (ESL) 55&Over Mixed - Weekend (Fall) Combo – Weekend (Fall)
	Monday & Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. earliest start; 2:00 p.m. latest start	18&Over – Weekday 40&Over – Weekday 55&Over – Weekday
Winter	Friday – 7:00 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 55&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 Tri-Level – Weekday
Summer (includes indoor and outdoor play; outdoor, Weeknight play is not allowed on courts without lights)	Monday-Thursday – 6:30 p.m. earliest start; 7:30 p.m. latest start* Friday – 7:00 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 – Weeknight/Weekend 40&Over – Weeknight/Weekend 55&Over – Weeknight/Weekend 65&Over – Weeknight/Weekend 18&Over Mixed – Weeknight/Weekend 40&Over Mixed – Weeknight/Weekend 55&Over Mixed - Weeknight/Weekend Combo – Weeknight/Weekend Tri-Level – Weeknight/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 Tri-Level – 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.

5) Chicago District League Format & Team Composition

- a) Team match format at the local level is determined by USTA Chicago.
- b) Local team match format may vary from the format required at District, State, Sectional, and National Championships.
- c) State, Sectional, and National Championships are progressions beyond the local league. For those Championships, the format is defined by USTA League Regulations 1.04A.
- d) 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 & Men	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 (Men & Women)	3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5	1 - Singles 3 - Doubles	9 (at level)
Adult 55 & Over (Men & Women)	6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	3 - Doubles	6
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
Mixed 55 & Over	6.0, 7.0, 8.0	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)	3.0/3.5/4.0 3.5/4.0/4.5 4.0/4.5/5.0	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.

**Minimum # of players mandated by USTA National rules; local USTA Chicago rules require the minimum # to also be at the level of play (i.e., if a minimum of 8 players is 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 USTA 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 may be removed from the league.*

6) 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 un-officiated. Players should be familiar with The Code, the Players' Guide to Fair Play and all matches should be played by its principles.

7) 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 the 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 is not allowed except as specified in section 18.e.ii.
- b) Bullying and harassment are prohibited by the USTA and USTA Chicago, including in Adult League play.
- c) Local league matches are un-officiated. Fairness in line calling and score keeping lies at the very heart of the game and of USTA League competition.

8) Season Dates

- a) Start and end dates for each league season are determined by the USTA Chicago District League Coordinator (DLC) and Adult League Committee (ALC).
- b) Season dates can be found on the USTA Chicago league calendar which is posted on the USTA Chicago website and on TennisLink.
- c) All matches should be played within the season dates.
- d) Generally, USTA Chicago league seasons are:
 - Early Start League (ESL) – September through December
 - Fall Leagues – September through December
 - Winter – January through May
 - Summer – May through September

9) 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 USTA Chicago website.
- b) 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.
- c) The team application deadline for each season is as shown on the USTA Chicago website. A late team application is subject to review and acceptance by the DLC who may seek input from the ALC as he/she sees fit. In most cases, late team applications will not be accepted after flights have been created. Flights are typically determined within 3 days of the team application deadline.

10) Acceptance of Facilities and Teams

- a) Host facilities MUST be located within USTA Chicago's geographic boundaries (Cook, Lake, and DuPage counties).
- b) 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).
- c) Team eligibility requirements for non-combined NTRP leagues:
 - i) A team shall consist of players eligible to compete at a specific NTRP level of competition. See USTA League Regulation 1.04D(4).
 - ii) The required minimum number of players on a roster must be at the league NTRP level. See section 5), Table 2.
 - iii) If the team does not meet the above requirements by the start date of the season as reflected on TennisLink, it may be removed from the league.

11) 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.

12) Balls

Balls for matches are provided by the home team.

13) Court Surfaces

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.

14) Team Dropping Out

- a) If a team withdraws from the league or is determined to be ineligible to play by the DLC, it is the responsibility of the DLC to notify each captain affected.
- b) It is the responsibility of each captain affected to notify their club regarding resulting court cancellations.
- c) It is the responsibility of each captain to inform their players of the withdrawal.
- d) Once the local League schedule has been made, a team dropping out may be subject to a disciplinary review and action by the ALC including the potential for exclusion from future league play.

15) Registration

- a) Once teams have been confirmed, players can begin registering starting on the registration open date. Please note: **REGISTRATION FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**
- b) **If a player is unable to play a match during a league season, they may request their registration to be transferred to another team within the same championship year. Registration transfers must be within the Chicago District. Requests to transfer registrations across districts will not be granted.**
- c) To facilitate optimal communication, each team must have a captain or co-captain as a registered player. If the captain is not a registered player on the team, he/she must designate a co-captain who is. Club pros/staff may be team captains but must name a co-captain that is a registered player on the team.
- d) Captains will provide a team number that players will use to register for the correct team.
- e) Registration open and close dates will be listed on the USTA Chicago league calendar and on TennisLink.
- f) Registration will close for all players on TennisLink two 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 two weeks of each season. The player registration deadline for self-rated and appeal-rated players is two weeks before the league end date shown on the team page of TennisLink (see Midwest Standing Order 1.04D(3)d). Computer-rated players should contact the DLC to register after the registration deadline (a message that registration is closed will be received when attempting to register).
- g) Players must register on a team prior to playing in a match. The DLC may 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 a default win for the opposing team. The scores will be maintained, as played, in TennisLink for ratings purposes.
- h) 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.

16) 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 USTA Chicago can only avoid scheduling conflicts within individual flights.
- b) If any player qualifies for any post-season play (play-offs and championships) in the same division and level on multiple teams, the player will have to declare on which team they will play at the first championship level the teams meet.

17) Captains' Duties:

- a) Team Management:
 - i) Captains must have access to the internet to submit Team Applications and to input match scores through TennisLink.
 - ii) Provide a current email address and contact phone number on both their team application and their USTA membership.
 - iii) Communicate regularly with other captains and co-captains about matches.
 - iv) Read and understand USTA Chicago – District League Rules and Procedures.
- b) Captain-to-Captain Communication.
 - i) Captain-to-captain confirmation for the match shall begin at least 5 days prior to the scheduled match.
 - ii) Either home or visiting captain may initiate confirmation.
 - iii) In the confirmation email, captains should include the location and day and time of the match. The home captain is encouraged to advise the visiting captain of considerations specific to the home facility, especially during the Summer Season advising if play will be outdoors.
 - iv) 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.
 - v) The opposing captain shall be advised prior to match start time, the name and contact information for an individual serving as acting captain at a match. The acting captain shall have the contact information (preferably cell phone number) of each player in their team's lineup and shall know USTA Chicago - District Rules and Procedures.
 - vi) Notification of defaults shall be made by a team captain to the opposing captain no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled match start time.
 - vii) Disputes of a match reported as a team default that is based on an issue with captain-to-captain communications, the DLC will resolve the dispute as follows:
 - If either captain fails to communicate his/her team's status (full lineup, positions being defaulted, etc.) 48 hours prior to the scheduled match day and time, the team that failed to communicate will lose the match by team default and be responsible for all court fees assessed by the home facility.
 - If neither captain communicates his/her team's status 48 hours prior to the scheduled match day and time, a double team default will be assessed and both teams will be responsible for all court fees if assessed by the home facility.
- c) Match Rescheduling
 - i) Reschedule requests must be considered if made prior to the season start date and at least 10 days before the original match date. In such cases, a new date for the match must also be agreed upon prior to the season's start date.
 - ii) Once the season starts, a team is not obligated to accommodate a request to reschedule a match. If home court time is no longer available for some reason, but the same day and time is available at the visiting team's facility, the home team is obligated to play the match at the originally scheduled time at the visiting team's facility.
 - iii) Teams with outdoor home facilities must provide indoor backup, for the scheduled match day and time, during the last two weeks of the Summer Season. If they are not able to provide indoor backup, the visitor's facility should be used. If neither team can provide indoor backup at the originally scheduled day and time, the match should be rescheduled to a mutually agreed upon day and time at an indoor facility.

- iv) A team requesting a reschedule must research to identify open dates in the opposing team's schedule and offer a minimum of 2 dates; 3 dates are preferable.
 - Match schedule conflicts shall be considered only within that league.
 - Days and times other than the regular home day and time may be offered.
 - Any rescheduled match must be played before the end of the league season.
- v) Requests to reschedule a match must be reported to the DLC within 7 days of the original match day and time. Failure to communicate with the DLC about a change in match day/time within this timeframe may result in a double team default.
- vi) If a new match date cannot be determined because of an issue with captain-to-captain communications, the DLC will resolve the dispute as follows:
 - If a captain fails to respond to repeated communications about rescheduling, his/her team will lose the match by default.
 - If neither captain communicates during the 7-day period, a double team default may be recorded.
- vii) All efforts to reschedule a match should be exhausted before reporting a match default. Once a match is recorded as a default in TennisLink, the match cannot be rescheduled for a later date.
- viii) Please see section 18 j.) Team Match Defaults, i. and ii.; USTA Chicago encourages at least some courts to be played when possible.
- ix) If a team match is rescheduled and must be played with courts starting at different times, the following Split Start Team Match Procedure shall be followed:
 - Both captains must agree to the split match times.
 - Split match times should occur on the same day.
 - A lesser or equal number of courts should be played at the earlier time. This scheduling will ensure that the team match outcome will not already be decided by the outcome of the sooner played match(es). (e.g., 1 court plays at the earlier time for a 3-court format; 1 or 2 courts play at the earlier time for a 4-court format; 2 courts play at the earlier time for a 5-court format).

d) Scorecards

- i) TennisLink provides the official USTA scorecard/line-up card which should be used for all matches. This scorecard should be printed and filled out by both captains at the time of the match.
- ii) The USTA League Match scores, including matches that are defaulted, must be recorded in TennisLink by either team captain within 48 hours of the completion of the match.
- iii) Printed scorecards and line-ups should be maintained as a backup for the TennisLink scoring system. Both captains are responsible for maintaining a copy of the scorecard/line-up for future references (disputes, ratings appeals, etc.).
- iv) Any player on the scorecard for a match that was defaulted can be changed to another player up until the end of the open registration period PROVIDED that the player receiving the match default was registered on the team at the date/time of the match default.
- v) If the status of a match is disputed, captains should notify the DLC immediately by email with the details of the dispute.
- vi) Any scores, including defaulted courts and entire team defaults, which remain unreported a week or more after the scheduled match date may be recorded as a double team default.

e) Pre-Match Confirmations

- i) Before the start of a match, the home captain shall advise the visiting captain if the match is untimed or Soft-timed or Hard-stop. If the match is Soft-timed or Hard-stop, both captains need to agree on when Timed Match Procedures shall begin. The home captain shall advise the visiting captain if a buzzer or a clock will signify the end of a Hard-stop match. Both captains should share all information with their players. Captains and acting captains may have other leadership roles during the course of a team match. See Section 18, for details.

18) Team Matches:

a) Match Format

- i) All Matches are best of 3 sets, with regular scoring and a 7-point set tiebreak at 6 all in each set. In the event of split sets, a 10-point match tiebreak shall be played to decide the winner of the match. Tiebreak format (standard vs. Coman) shall be decided before the start of the match.
- ii) All untimed matches are played to completion. If there is a time limitation imposed by the host facility, follow the Timed Match Procedures (see Section 18h).

b) Line Up Exchange

- i) In accordance with National Regulation 2.01C(6), the team captain (or acting captain) for each team shall exchange their team line-ups simultaneously prior to the beginning of the team match.
- ii) USTA Chicago recommends that line-ups should not be exchanged before all players in the match are present.
- iii) In the event all players are not present at the scheduled start time, USTA Chicago recommends that players warm-up with their own teammates.

c) Warm-Ups & Default Time

- i) Warm-up time is 10 minutes.
- ii) A player arriving late can join the warm-up in progress but will not be given additional time past 10 minutes.
- iii) An individual match default may be claimed after lineups have been exchanged, and a player fails to appear on court, ready to play, by 10 minutes after the scheduled match start time.

d) Official Clock

- i) Prior to going on the court, the official clock at the home team facility must be designated by the home captain.
- ii) In cases where one clock cannot be used for all courts, multiple clocks can be used including ONE cell phone on court ONLY for use as the official clock. In such cases, the clock on the cell phone must remain visible to all players. Upon agreement of all players, an alarm can be set on the clock to announce 20 minutes prior to the end of the match time.
- iii) It is the responsibility of both captains to communicate to their players which clock is the official time if more than one is visible from the court

e) Involvement of Non-Player

- i) Players are expected to be knowledgeable of general tennis rules and the USTA Chicago District League Rules and Procedures. The USTA Chicago District League Rules and Procedures can be made accessible during match play through hard copies brought onto the courts prior to the match or online through use of a cell phone.

- ii) No spectator (players on adjacent courts, captains and club coordinators are also considered spectators) has a part in a match with the exception of clarification of Timed Match Procedures. Captains are only allowed to come on court to help facilitate Timed Match Procedures during the last 20 minutes of the match; but players on court must ask them to come on court for their help. Please keep in mind that calling for help may delay play during the critical remaining 20 minutes of the match.
- iii) Players on-court should resolve all differences together. Resolutions that are in conflict with USTA Chicago rules will stand if all players, in good faith, agreed on how to resolve the match/conflict.
- iv) In cases of unresolvable disagreements or disputed matches, the DLC, in conjunction with the ALC if necessary, will review the situation and advise captains of the appropriate solution which could include:
 - Double default of court in question if both teams were at fault/unaware of applicable rules.
 - Default of court in question against the team at fault/unaware of applicable rules.
 - Initiation of Grievance Process (see Section 19) if assigning fault is not immediately clear. The Grievance Process is designed to gather information from all parties involved, confirm if a rule was violated and issue an appropriate consequence.

f) Continuous Play

- i) Play is continuous throughout league matches including during the last 20 minutes.
- ii) Drinking water and toweling off during the last 20 minutes of a match is acceptable; but players need to be aware of time limitations between points and when changing ends as spelled out in the Timed Match Procedure (Section 18h).

g) Injury During Match Play

- i) 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).
- ii) 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.

h) Timed Match Procedure (See Appendix A: Timed Match Handout which can be printed for on court use.)

- i) These rules will apply to any match that requires a time limitation. All matches must be scheduled for a minimum of 2 hours in length. The Timed Match Procedure should begin 20 minutes prior to the end of match time. All time-restricted matches will consist of best of three sets with a 10-point tiebreak played in lieu of a third set.
- ii) There are two types of Timed Matches: Hard-stop and Soft-Timed. Both types of Timed Matches have the Timed Procedures beginning at 20 minutes before the designated end time. A Hard-stop Match ends immediately at the designated time and/or at the sound of the buzzer. A Soft-timed Match follows all the Timed Match Procedures. However, any tie-breaks should be played to completion. Prior to the start of a match, the home captain should advise the visiting captain and all participants if the match will be Untimed, Hard-Stop or Soft-Timed. If a match is Hard-stop, the home captain should advise the visiting captain and all participants, what signifies the end of the match, i.e., specific clock or buzzer.

iii) The home team clock, timer, watch or cell phone can be used to track the official time. Devices with alarms are highly recommended. It is the responsibility of both captains to let their players know the official time clock.

(a) **IF YOU ARE IN THE FIRST SET, AT 20 MINUTES BEFORE MATCH END:**

- a game in progress should be completed using no-ad scoring (see Note 1 below).
- Team with a 2 game lead, wins the first set.
- **if there is only a one game difference in the score, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.**
- **if that game results in one team being ahead by 2 games, that team wins the set.**
- if games are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2); winner of tiebreak wins the first set.
- if neither team is ahead by 2 games, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.
- if, after the additional game is played, both teams are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2) to determine the first set winner.
- play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2) to determine the second set winner.
- upon completion of the second set, if each team has won a set, play a match tiebreak (first to 10 by a margin of 2) to determine the match winner.

(b) **IF YOU ARE IN THE SECOND SET, AT 20 MINUTES BEFORE MATCH END:**

- a game in progress should be completed using no-ad scoring (see Note 1 below).
- Team with a 2 game lead, wins the second set.
- **if there is only a one game difference in the score, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.**
- **if that game results in one team being ahead by 2 games, that team wins the set.**
- if games are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2); winner of tiebreak wins the second set.
- if neither team is ahead by 2 games, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.
- if, after the additional game is played, both teams are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2) to determine the second set winner.
- if the result of this should be that each team has won a set, play a Match tiebreak (first to 10 by a margin of 2) to determine the Match winner.

(c) **Hard-stop Timed match: if time should run out and/or the buzzer sounds signaling that it is time to leave the court** during any tiebreak, the team ahead by 2 points shall win the set. If the tiebreak score is tied or there is only a 1-point advantage, the set shall end in a tie. Please note that once you have entered into the last 20 minutes of the match, ANY tiebreaks in progress should be completed unless time runs out and/or the buzzer sounds to leave the court.

iv) To keep the match moving and make the most of the allotted time:

- Warm-ups should not exceed 10 minutes.
- Play shall be continuous.
- Any point in progress when the buzzer sounds should be played to completion.
- The maximum time allowed between points and games is 25 seconds. At the completion of a game, if there is any time left, players must begin another game. A 90-second break will be allowed when changing ends.

- If play is indoors, you may agree to change ends only after the completion of a set. This should be agreed to by both teams prior to the start of the match.
- Coman tiebreaks will be used during championship progression. However standard tiebreak procedures (change ends when score equals a multiple of 6) may save time. All players must agree to the type of tiebreak to be used prior to the match.
- Note 1: If either team already has the ad point when the Timed Match Procedure goes into effect, an additional point will be played. After that point has been played, if the result is deuce, a deciding point will be played to determine the winner of that game.
- Note 2: If teams on an individual court are tied after following the Timed Match Procedure, mark the visiting team as the winner and record the scores from the visiting team's perspective. The visiting team is marked off as the winner only because TennisLink requires that a winner be chosen. When entering the scores for an incomplete 3rd set match tiebreak, (meaning neither team is ahead by 2 points) do not enter a score for the third set (match tiebreak). Record the scores for the first and second sets as if the visiting team won the court. Mark the visiting team as the winner. Notify your DLC of the tie, providing the match number and court that tied. The DLC will make a manual adjustment to account for the tied court and evaluate its impact on the team match result. The DLC will confer with both captains to be sure the appropriate team is awarded the win in TennisLink. The DLC will keep track of the match in the event that season standings come down to individual court wins and the manual adjustment needs to be considered.

i) Individual Match (Court) Defaults

i) When defaults are necessary, the defaults shall be determined by the defaulting team captain in accordance with USTA regulation 2.03K.

- 5-court match (2 singles and 3 doubles format):
 - 7 players: default 2nd singles
 - 6 players: default 3rd doubles
 - 5 players: default 2nd singles & 3rd doubles
 - 4 players: default 2nd & 3rd doubles
- 4-court Match (1 singles, 3 doubles format):
 - 6 players: default singles
 - 5 players: default 3rd doubles
- 3-court Match (1 singles, 2 doubles format):
 - 4 players: default singles
 - 3 players: default 2nd doubles
- 3-court Match (3 doubles format)
 - 4 or 5 players: default 3rd doubles

ii) When a specific line is defaulted by a captain during the match confirmation period, that line must remain as a default unless both captains are in agreement to adjust defaults in order to play as many individual courts as possible.

- iii) The defaulting team is responsible for all court fees assessed by the facility if the notification of the defaulted court was after the 48-hour default notification deadline.
- iv) An individual match default may be claimed when a player fails to appear on court and ready to play by 10 minutes after the scheduled match start time.
- v) In the event a player fails to show or is late causing a default, the defaulting team is responsible for all fees for that court. The opposing player(s) are to be refunded or reimbursed their paid fee
- vi) Until fees assessed due to late notice, or an individual default are paid, each individual on the team roster and each listed captain and co-captain are ineligible to participate in – including but not limited to – current season for any team in local League round robin play, future season USTA League Matches or League Championships in the USTA Chicago District.
- vii) Clubs hosting USTA League matches should inform the DLC when an individual court or all courts are defaulted, and court fees are not paid.

j) **Team Match Defaults**

- i) For all team match formats, the majority of individual matches must be played to count as a valid team match (e.g., 2 courts for a team match format that is 3 courts; 3 courts for a 4-court format, 3 courts for a 5-court format). See Midwest Standing Orders.
- ii) If a team is not able to play the minimum number of courts for a valid match during round robin league play, the match will be recorded as a team match default in favor of the opposing team. In order to encourage play, USTA Chicago will record the scores from any individual matches played for NTRP purposes and player playoff qualification.
- iii) If both teams contribute to less than the minimum number of courts being played (i.e., each team defaults a court(s) causing the match to be invalid), the team match will be counted as a double default in the standings. Any courts played will count for NTRP purposes and play-off qualification. Any defaulted courts will be recorded as double defaults in TennisLink.
- iv) The defaulting team is responsible for all fees assessed by the facility due to notification after the 48-hour default notification deadline.
- v) Until fees assessed due to late notice are paid, each individual on the team roster and each listed captain and co-captain are ineligible to participate in – including but not limited to – current season for any team in local League round robin play, future season USTA League Matches or League Championships in the USTA Chicago District.
- vi) Clubs hosting USTA League matches should inform the DLC when an individual court or all courts are defaulted and court fees are not paid.
- vii) A match default will be counted as a win in the standings for the non-defaulting team. However, standings will be subject to review if the team in the number one position has received more than one full team default win. The DLC will work with the Adult League Committee to review the circumstances surrounding the defaults, and confirm the season winner.

viii) The DLC will review all recorded matches at the end of each season to identify teams/captains of defaulted matches. Captains **who offer three or more full team defaults within the same season for the same team** will be identified and may be denied entry into the next season's leagues.

k) Procedures in the Event of a Tie

- i) In accordance with National rule 2.03E, in the event of **a tie in individual courts** won during a team match, the tie will be broken in the following order:
 - Sets. Loser of the fewest number of sets.
 - Games. Loser of the fewest number of games.
 - Game winning percentage. Total games won divided by total games played (courts won by a default are not counted).
 - Winner of No. 1 Doubles.
- ii) In the event of **a tie in the standings**, whether in round robin or single elimination competition, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so
 - Individual **Wins**. Winner of the most individual **courts** in the entire competition.
 - Head-to-Head. Winner of the head-to-head match.
 - Sets. Loser of the fewest number of sets.
 - Games. Loser of the fewest number of games.
 - A method to be determined by the Championships Committee (if applicable). Procedure to be announced prior to commencement of championship competition.

l) Rain Procedures

- i) When matches are scheduled to be played outdoors and no indoor courts are available for back up, captains should discuss prior to the match what options to consider if weather becomes an issue.
- ii) If it is raining at the time of a scheduled match, captains should identify a new date and time for the match to be resumed, informing players that they may be required to set up their own match to finish any match in progress, determining an appropriate time to delay a match.
- iii) If any match is rescheduled from the original TennisLink date/time, the DLC must be notified within 7 days or the match may be recorded as a double default (See Section 17c).

m) Severe Weather Procedures

- i) Player safety is a priority to USTA Chicago.
- ii) When a severe or hazardous weather warning, **including but not limited to a winter storm warning, extreme heat warning, or hazardous air quality** is issued by the National Weather Service affecting the facility hosting the match and/or the visiting team, either captain may decide it is not safe for players to travel **or compete in said hazardous conditions**. In such a case, the match will be rescheduled at the earliest time convenient for both captains.
- iii) If any match is rescheduled from the original TennisLink date/time, the DLC must be notified within 7 days or the match may be recorded as a double team default (See Section 17c.v).

19) Grievance Procedure

- a) General grievances must be filed by a team captain with the appropriate USTA District League Grievance Form e-mailed to the USTA Chicago District League Coordinator, with a \$50.00 check made out to USTA Chicago mailed separately to the USTA Chicago office. Electronic payments can be arranged by contacting the USTA Chicago office. The DLC will then forward the grievance form to the District League Grievance Chair.
- b) The grievance form can be found at: [**Midwest League Rules, Regulations & Forms**](#). When completing the Grievance form, captains should include, but not necessary, reference to the rule (National League Regulations, Midwest Standing Orders, Friend at Court, or CDTA Rules and Procedures) violated.
- c) The intended party to the grievance must reply to the District League Grievance Chair via the DLC email no later than 2 days after receipt of the grievance. If the general grievance is upheld, as decided by the District Grievance Committee, the \$50.00 fee will be refunded.
- d) NTRP and Administrative Grievances are filed with the Midwest Section. The fee for an NTRP and Administrative Grievance is determined and collected by the Midwest Section.

20) Local Play-Offs & Championships

- a) Flights with sub-flights **or who were assigned random matches instead of a full round robin, will** have play-offs at the close of each season to determine the season flight winner. **Flight Playoffs are considered a form of Championship.**
- b) USTA Chicago District Championships will consist of competition between the flight winners from each season.
- c) When USTA Officials are not available to work championship events, USTA Chicago reserves the right to use court monitors to act on behalf of USTA Chicago, as USTA officials for those events.
- d) Any team that wins more than one season has to choose which team they will bring to play-offs, unless the team has enough qualified, unique players to roster multiple seasons. Should the team bring multiple season representative teams, each team must have an acting captain to fulfill captain duties during championships.
- e) In the event that a flight 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 will be asked to participate in the championship.
- f) Applying USTA League Regulation 2.03A(3), to be eligible for a Local League Playoff, an individual must have participated in a minimum of 2 matches during round-robin competition in that Local League; a retired match counts and a maximum of 1 win by default counts. Each team that participates in League Playoffs/District Championships is responsible for paying the applicable USTA Chicago District Championship team fee.

Appendix A

TIMED MATCH PROCEDURES HANDOUT

These rules will apply to any match that requires a time limitation. All matches must be scheduled for a minimum of 2 hours in length. The Timed Match Procedure should begin 20 minutes prior to the end of match time. All time-restricted matches will consist of best of three sets with a 10-point tiebreak played in lieu of a third set.

There are two types of Timed Matches: Hard-stop and Soft-Timed. Both types of Timed Matches have the Timed Procedures beginning at 20 minutes before the designated end time. A Hard-stop Match ends immediately at the designated time and/or at the sound of the buzzer. A Soft-timed Match follows all the Timed Match Procedures. However, any tie-breaks should be played to completion. Prior to the start of a match, the home captain should advise the visiting captain and all participants if the match will be Untimed, Hard-Stop or Soft-Timed. If a match is Hard-stop, the home captain should advise the visiting captain and all participants, what signifies the end of the match, i.e., specific clock or buzzer.

The home team clock, timer, watch or cell phone can be used to track the official time. Devices with alarms are highly recommended. It is the responsibility of both captains to let their players know the official time clock.

IF YOU ARE IN THE FIRST SET, AT 20 MINUTES BEFORE MATCH END:

- a game in progress should be completed using no-ad scoring (see Note 1 below).
- Team with 2 game lead, wins the first set.
- **if there is only a one game difference in the score, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.**
- **if that game results in one team being ahead by 2 games, that team wins the set.**
- if games are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2); winner of tiebreak wins the first set.
- if neither team is ahead by 2 games, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.
- if, after the additional game is played, both teams are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2) to determine the first set winner.
- play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2) to determine the second set winner.
- upon completion of the second set, if each team has won a set, play a match tiebreak (first to 10 by a margin of 2) to determine the match winner.

IF YOU ARE IN THE SECOND SET, AT 20 MINUTES BEFORE MATCH END:

- a game in progress should be completed using no-ad scoring (see Note 1 below).
- Team with 2 game lead, wins the second set.
- **if there is only a one game difference in the score, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.**
- **if that game results in one team being ahead by 2 games, that team wins the set.**
- if games are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2); winner of tiebreak wins the second set.
- if neither team is ahead by 2 games, play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring.
- if, after the additional game is played, both teams are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by a margin of 2) to determine the second set winner.
- if the result of this should be that each team has won a set, play a Match tiebreak (first to 10 by a margin of 2) to determine the Match winner.

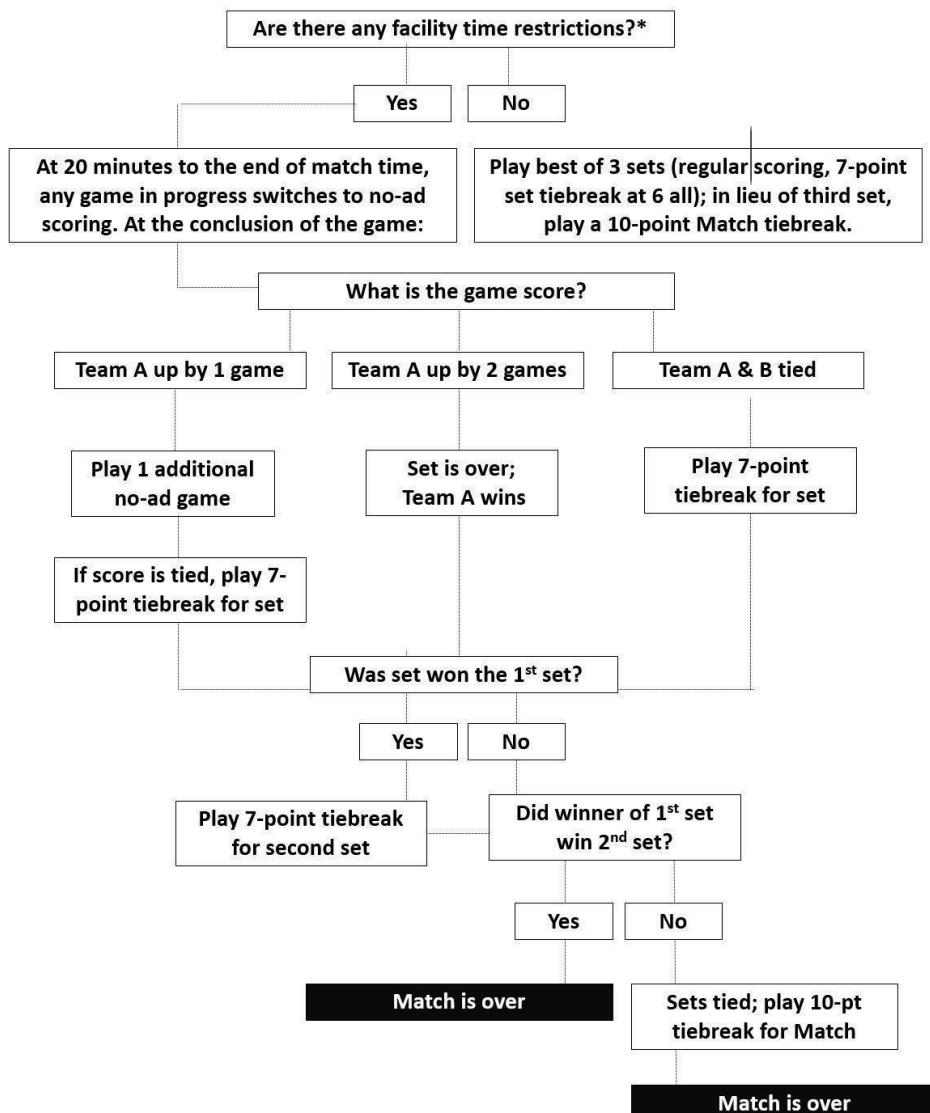
Hard-stop Timed match: if time should run out and/or the buzzer sounds signaling that it is time to leave the court during any tiebreak, the team ahead by 2 points shall win the set. If the tiebreak score is tied or there is only a 1-point advantage, the set shall end in a tie. Please note that once you have entered into the last 20 minutes of the match, ANY tiebreaks in progress should be completed unless time runs out and/or the buzzer sounds to leave the court.

To keep the match moving and make the most of the allotted time:

- Warm-ups should not exceed 10 minutes.
- Play shall be continuous.
- Any point in progress when the buzzer sounds should be played to completion.
- The maximum time allowed between points and games is 25 seconds. At the completion of a game, if there is any time left, players must begin another game. A 90-second break will be allowed when changing ends.
- If play is indoors, you may agree to change ends only after the completion of a set. This should be agreed to by both teams prior to the start of the match.
- Coman tiebreaks will be used during championship progression. However standard tiebreak procedures (change ends when score equals a multiple of 6) may save time. All players must agree to the type of tiebreak to be used prior to the match.
- Note 1: If either team already has the ad point when the Timed Match Procedure goes into effect, an additional point will be played. After that point has been played, if the result is deuce, a deciding point will be played to determine the winner of that game.
- Note 2: If teams on an individual court are tied after following the Timed Match Procedure, mark the visiting team as the winner and record the scores from the visiting team's perspective. The visiting team is marked off as the winner only because TennisLink requires that a winner be chosen. When entering the scores for an incomplete 3rd set match tiebreak, (meaning neither team is ahead by 2 points) do not enter a score for the third set (match tiebreak). Record the scores for the first and second sets as if the visiting team won the court. Mark the visiting team as the winner. Notify your DLC of the tie, providing the match number and court that tied. The DLC will make a manual adjustment to account for the tied court and evaluate its impact on the team match result. The DLC will confer with both captains to be sure the appropriate team is awarded the win in TennisLink. The DLC will keep track of the match in the event that season standings come down to individual court wins and the manual adjustment needs to be considered.

USTA Chicago Timed Match Procedure

At the beginning of any match, both teams must agree and understand the time allocated for the match by the host facility. The home captain should advise if the match will be Hard-stop or Soft-timed. Hard-stop matches end immediately at the designated time and/or at the sound of the buzzer. Soft-timed matches allow any tie-breaks to be played to completion. Captains must also agree on the official timeclock for each court.



*Notes:

- When time restrictions are necessary, all courts associated with the team match must abide by the restriction.
- If either team has the ad point when the Timed Match Procedure initially goes into effect, an additional point will be played. After that point has been played if the result is deuce, a final point will be played to determine the winner of that game.