

International Clearance Process

First and foremost, the wavier form will no longer be accepted by US Soccer after May 15, 2011. The wavier form has been replaced by what is called the "FIFA TMS Minors Process" and the first registration process. The Prior to 12 process remains as one of the most efficient manners by which to clear a player. Players over the age of 18 are still subject to the normal ITC process.

BACKGROUND

FIFA requires all players over the age of 12, regardless of their ability or citizenship, to receive an international transfer clearance ("ITC") from their former country when they are attempting to register to play soccer in a different country (i.e., the United States). U.S. Soccer is responsible for obtaining that ITC on behalf of all players in the U.S. participating in affiliated leagues.

FIFA, however, prohibits the transfer of players between the ages of 12 to 17 (minors) unless the player meets one of two exceptions:

- (a) The player has moved with his/her parents to the U.S. for reasons other than playing soccer (e.g. work);
or
- (b) The player and prospective club are both located within 30 miles of an international border.

If the player can prove to FIFA that either of the two exceptions above has been met, U.S. Soccer would be permitted to request the ITC for that minor player. If the player does not meet one of the two exceptions above, the available options to register are listed below.

In 2009, FIFA instituted the FIFA TMS system. TMS is an online method to provide FIFA with documentation to prove that a player fits either of the two exceptions above. Documents are uploaded into FIFA's system and are reviewed by FIFA, who then makes the final determination on whether an ITC request could be fulfilled for a minor player. However, U.S. Soccer has received a limited exemption from FIFA from the requirement to use the electronic FIFA TMS system. U.S. Soccer is now responsible for the documentation, review and determination of whether a player meets either of the two exceptions above. Although required to uphold the same standards as FIFA, U.S. Soccer is able to review the documents on an expedited basis and determine whether an ITC request could be made for a minor player.

International Transfer Clearance Options

Under FIFA's rules, there are four options by which a player born outside of the U.S. can register with an affiliated league:

Entry Prior to Age 12 - Players who entered the U.S. prior to the age of 12 (regardless of their current age) can supply a copy of an official document to prove that fact (e.g. - report cards, immunization records, doctor records). [Please click here for complete details and the Entry Prior to Age 12 form.](#) This process becomes the quickest method by which to clear a player. Prior to 12 submission form + official documentation proving that they player was taking part in society before his/her 12th birthday would result in immediate approval once reviewed by USSF.

First Registration

U.S. Citizens - U.S. citizens born outside of the U.S. (regardless of current age) may simply complete and sign the First Registration form attesting that the player has never

been registered at any level to play soccer in any other country. U.S. Soccer can immediately clear the player.

Non-U.S. Citizens – A player born outside of the U.S., who is currently over the age of 18, may also complete and sign the First Registration form. U.S. Soccer will contact the foreign federation for confirmation, and once that is received, U.S. Soccer can clear the player. This process will now take about 7-10 days total from receipt of the paperwork by USSF.

[Please click here for complete details and the First Registration form.](#)

Minors – Any player currently between the ages of 12 to 17 who is NOT eligible for one of the preceding methods must prove to U.S. Soccer that he/she meets one of the exceptions (a) or (b) above. Once verified, U.S. Soccer will request the ITC from the former federation. Per FIFA regulations, that federation has up to *30 days* to respond after which U.S. Soccer can issue a provisional international transfer clearance. [Please click here for complete details and the FIFA ITC forms for minors.](#)

ITC Request – Players 18 years of age and over who are not eligible for the Entry Prior to Age 12 or First Registration options, will need to fill out the ITC Request Form and submit it to U.S. Soccer. U.S. Soccer will then request the ITC from the former federation. Per FIFA regulations, that federation has up to 30 days to respond after which U.S. Soccer can issue a provisional international transfer clearance. [Please click here for complete details and FIFA ITC request forms.](#)

Documentation for Minors and ITC request need to be forwarded to the USSF Registrar's office (can be accepted via e-mail, fax, or mail) and strongly suggests one submission per player. So plan and gather all required documents so that you can send everything at once. US Soccer will review the documents, and provided the documentation proves that the player has moved with his/her "parents for reasons other than playing soccer", will immediately request the ITC from the foreign federation.

If there is not sufficient documentation to apply the exception, US Soccer will deny the ITC Request application, and the player will be prevented from participating in any 'official' matches. An 'official' match is defined by FIFA as any match that leads toward a national championship, and US Soccer further defines it as any match that counts in your league standings.

Please contact the USSF Registrar, [Mike Gorman](#) at USSF with any questions.