



## ILLINOIS FUSION PARTNERSHIP WITH CHICAGO FIRE

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### **WHY PARTNER WITH THE CHICAGO FIRE SOCCER CLUB?**

We have been designated an Illinois Fire Junior Youth Soccer Club. The opportunity to align ourselves with a professional organization such as the Chicago Fire will be a tremendous benefit to our club. The Chicago Fire is committed to build upon our foundation to ensure our children receive world-class coaching and the ultimate soccer experience. This will provide us access to additional resources and training that will help us further enhance our club.

#### **WHO MADE THIS DECISION?**

This was a unanimous decision made by the current Illinois Fusion Board of Directors. After many meetings with the Chicago Fire, as well as lengthy conversations with other youth clubs, we heard overwhelmingly positive information we feel will benefit all of our players.

#### **ARE WE STILL ILLINOIS FUSION?**

Effective June 1, 2017, we will be Illinois Fire Juniors.

#### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY CHILD?**

The new club will be in a better position to offer the appropriate playing platform for all players. With a wider pool of resources and enhanced programming, all players from the beginner to the elite will have the appropriate place to play at Illinois Fire Juniors regardless of ability or age.

#### **WILL MY CHILD LOSE HIS OR HER PLACE ON THEIR CURRENT TEAM?**

We will hold try-outs in May/June, just as we have always done. Each team will be filled with the appropriate number of players based on their ability, attitude, fit for a given team, and commitment to the team. The club is committed to making sure every player is placed on the right team.

#### **WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN WITH MY CURRENT COACH?**

All coaches have been provided with an insight into the Fire Juniors programs and the expectations of becoming a Fire Juniors coach. All final coaching placements will be determined by the number of teams and players registered for the club for next season.

#### **WILL PLAYER FEES OR VOLUNTEER HOURS INCREASE FOR THE 2017-2018 SEASON?**

No - our player fees will not increase for the 2017-2018 season. Our Board of Directors will continue to review the budget quarterly, and potential fee increases will be reviewed throughout the year as we have always done.

No - our volunteer hours will not increase for the 2017-2018 season. Every family will continue to complete one of two options: the option to serve four volunteer hours for each child playing on our teams, up to a maximum of eight hours per seasonal year, or "opt out" of volunteering and pay \$200 per child per seasonal year.

#### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR UNIFORMS AND SPIRIT WEAR?**

As previously communicated, our current uniform kit is expiring this summer. Our Uniform Director is working closely with the Chicago Fire to establish our new kit for ordering in June 2017 once try-outs are complete. However, we are partnering with the Chicago Fire in the middle of their uniform cycle. Therefore, we will need to purchase new uniforms in June 2018 as well that will be available until June 2020. Our Uniform Director is keeping this in mind when determining our kits to keep costs as low as possible. As in the past, the uniform kit is not included in annual club player registration fees. Once the uniform kit has been established, additional information will be communicated in regards to ordering Spirit Wear as well.



### **WILL THERE BE A NEW LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE?**

No - Our Board of Directors will remain intact, with one Chicago Fire representative being added to the Board. Myron King will continue as our Director of Coaching. Chrissy and Sarah will continue as our Club Administrators.

### **WHAT IS THE EMERGING TALENT PROGRAM?**

Select players from the club will be recommended for this special program. It is an elite program for players 13 years old and up with selections being made by the Chicago Fire Youth Development Staff. This is a series of initiatives designed to meet the attitudes, desires, and aspirations of today's top talent in our Chicago Fire youth development programs. This is supplementary and in addition to existing club practices and games.

### **WHAT IS THE USSF ACADEMY?**

Chicago Fire has a Boy's USSF Academy program. Players who play for Illinois Fire Juniors may be invited to train and potentially play on a Boy's Fire Academy team. This is a very select program for the truly top players. A session with the Chicago Fire Academy Director will help identify these top players. There is a hope to add a Girl's program in the future.

### **WHO IS THE CHICAGO FIRE SOCCER CLUB?**

Founded on the 126th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire on October 8, 1997, the Chicago Fire Soccer Club enters its 20th Major League Soccer season. The Fire won the MLS Cup in its inaugural campaign in 1998 and was crowned champion of U.S. Soccer's national tournament, the Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup, in 1998, 2000, 2003 and 2006. For more information on the Chicago Fire Soccer Club, please visit the club's official website at [www.Chicago-Fire.com](http://www.Chicago-Fire.com).

### **WHO ARE THE FIRE JUNIORS YOUTH CLUBS?**

The Fire Juniors are the official youth soccer clubs of the Chicago Fire. The Fire Juniors Youth Club model was the first youth program of its kind in Major League Soccer (MLS) and today includes more than 6,000 travel players nationwide:

- **Chicago Fire Juniors (North)** - Des Plaines, IL
- **Chicago Fire Juniors (West)** - Plainfield, IL
- **Chicago Fire Juniors (South)** - Orland Park, IL
- **Chicago Fire Juniors (City)** - Chicago, IL
- **Michigan Fire Juniors** - Grandville, MI
- **Kentucky Fire Juniors** - Louisville, KY
- **Louisiana Fire Juniors** - New Orleans, LA
- **Florida Fire Juniors** - Fort Myers, FL
- **Indiana Fire Juniors** - Westfield, IN
- **Indiana Fire Juniors (South)** - Evansville, IL
- **Illinois Fire Juniors** - Bloomington/Normal, IL

The mission statement of the Fire Juniors is - "To Lead the Evolution of Youth Soccer in the United States."

The vision statement of the Fire Juniors is - "To foster a culture of excellence both on and off the field of play. To create an environment that develops players from grassroots through to college, MLS and National Teams."

### **WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**

Our Board of Directors is happy to visit with you on your individual questions. Myron King, our Director of Coaching, is available as well.