



New Hampshire Soccer Association
National Licenses and Coaching Schools



TO NHTA Members
FROM Jeffrey Cousineau – NHTA Director of Coaching Education
RE New USSF Coaching Course Pathway – UPDATED
DATE December 2020

I am writing this open letter to the NHTA soccer community to formally announce the changes in the US Soccer Federation coaching courses and coaching pathway.

NEW CURRICULUM

USFF has made significant changes to the coaching course curriculum and the coaching course pathway. All the changes are to improve the learning environment for youth players during their most formative years, U5-12. The centerpiece of the new coaching curriculum is a player centered learning environment based on whole-part-whole teaching style. The new initiative looks to protect against over-coaching and move away from the prioritization on ‘winning games’. History has shown that ‘coach-centered’ environments and ‘prioritizing winning’ have limited player development, or worse, led to youth players losing interest in soccer and quitting soccer. Instead, by using the new practice structure of Play-Practice-Play, the youth players will be able to experiment and develop their soccer skills in game-like activities and have the freedom to develop at their own pace.

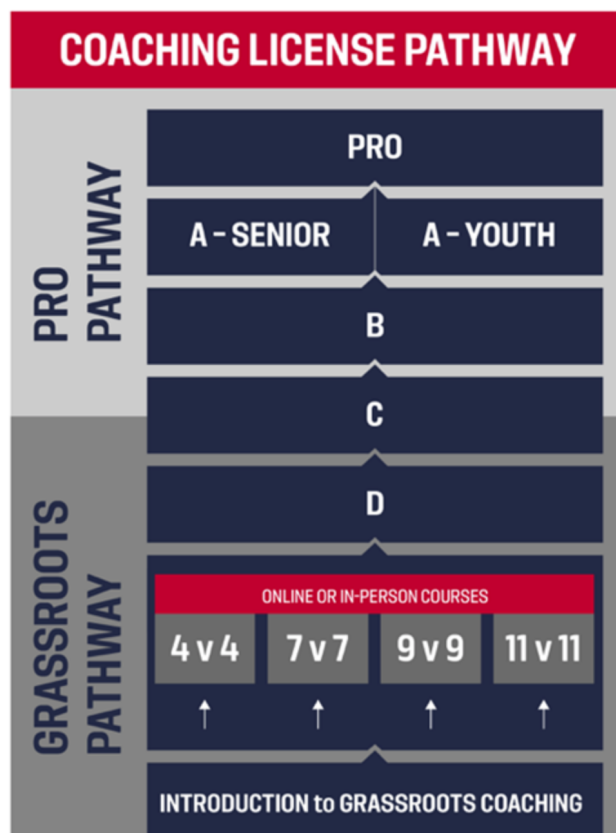
A primary change to the coaching curriculum is to better support volunteer coaches, known as the grassroots coach. It is these coaches who make the first impression on youth players and they deserve the support of USSF and NHTA. The new coaching curriculum creates an easy to manage training environment for the grassroots coach through the use of player-centered environment. The training sessions are based on a coaching methodology called Play-Practice-Play. Meanwhile, USSF has written hundreds of Play-Practice-Play training sessions and made them available through the USSF Learning Center (LC). Each session will be designed to address a specific player quality and action. In short, the new format will allow coaches to focus their time and energy to guiding players through game-like activities, instead of creating training sessions.

As of January 1, 2018, USSF has retired the entry level licensing courses, the USSF F and E License, and replaced the old licenses with the new Grassroots Licenses. The Grassroots (GR) Licenses consists of five (5) modules, the ‘Introduction to Grassroots’, Grassroots 4v.4, 7v.7, 9v.9 and 11v.11. These new Grassroots Licenses are the entry points of the USSF coaching pathway and lead into the USSF National D License.

The new USSF coaching course pathway is shown in the figure to the right.

All coaches begin their coaching pathway with a free 20-minute online webinar, ‘Introduction of Grassroots’. Coaches can take this free webinar through the USSF Learning Center (LC) at learning.usssoccer.com

After completing the ‘Introduction to Grassroots’ module, coaches will be eligible to take any of the four Grassroots Pathway courses; 4v.4, 7v.7, 9v.9 and 11v.11. The licenses can be taken in any order and the course can be completed





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either in person or online. Once you complete a Grassroots course, you will receive the US Soccer Grassroots Coaching License for that level.

The changes in coaching curriculum has also created changes in the USSF National D License. Starting in 2018, the USSF National D License reflects the new coaching curriculum and philosophies featured in the Grassroots Licenses. Therefore, the demands and expectations of the coaching candidates have been adjusted to better meet the needs and abilities of the volunteer coaches. While curriculum for the USSF National D License has changed, the course is still 40+ hours.

BLENDED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The challenges created by the pandemic has forced USSF to rethink the way candidates can experience the USSF coaching courses. The most notable change to the USSF classroom environment is the implementation of virtual classrooms. Now, all USSF Coaching Courses, Grassroots Licenses and USSF National D License, have virtual conference calls as the classroom environment. Grassroots Licenses and the National D License still have in-person experience, but the in-person is limited to field session work, which is held outdoors.

Grassroot License Format

The Grassroots License are 4-hour courses that is split between a 2-hour virtual conference call and a 2-hour in-person field session. The conference call and the in-person field sessions are held with 48 hours of each other and candidates MUST attend all 4-hours of the course to earn the license.

USSF National D License Format

USSF is now running a blended curriculum format for the USSF National D License. The blended learning format has four key elements:

- Asynchronous Work - Candidates watch on-line videos
- Conference Call Virtual Classroom - Candidates attend a virtual conference call
- Formative Assessment Homework - Variety of homework assignments completed during the course
- In-Person Field Session - A single day-long, full class event held on the soccer field

The course runs is spread over 13 weeks. Each week the candidate has 1.5 – 4.0 hours of work that is a combination of asynchronous work, conference calls and homework. The course concludes with the in-person field session. The total time invested in the course over the 13 weeks is 40+ hours.

TRAINING AND LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC

Everyone at NHSA and USSF takes the safety and well-being of the soccer community very seriously. As such, NHSA and the NH Instructional Staff follow all local, state and national social distancing protocols. In many cases, NHSA exceeds the provided governmental guidelines.

Some common things coaching candidates can expect at in-person events:

- Wearing a mask at the field
- Hand sanitizer at the field
- Social distancing (6 feet) of the class

Everyone at NHSA thanks you in advance for your cooperation during these very difficult times.



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COURSE SEQUENCE, REQUIREMENT AND KEY POINTS

- Begin with the 'Introduction to Grassroots' Module
Coaches start by creating a free profile on the USSF LC and then take the free online 20-minute webinar course.
- Grassroots License Options
Coaches can choose to take any of the Grassroots licenses. The licenses can be taken in any order and the course can be completed either in person or online.
 - Online Grassroots Licenses
An online version of a Grassroots license takes approximately 3+ hours to complete. USSF charges \$25 to take the online license through the LC.
 - Blended In-person Grassroots Licenses
An in-person version of the Grassroots licenses is a 4-hour course. The first 2-hours are virtual classroom work and the final 2-hours are an in-person field session. The cost of a single in-person Grassroots License is \$70.
- USSF National D License Course Requirements
Coaches must complete three (3) Grassroots licenses, with two (2) of the Grassroots licenses being completed in-person and one (1) of the in-person courses must be the Grassroots 11v.11 License.
- Grandfathered Courses
 - USSF F License
Coaches who have earned a USSF F License can count the F License as one (1) online Grassroots course when qualifying for the USSF D License. However, coaches will still need to take the free online 'Introduction to Grassroots' webinar in preparation for the USSF D License.
 - USSF E License
Coaches who have earned a USSF National E License will qualify for the USSF National D License after taking the free online 'Introduction to Grassroots' webinar.
 - USSF D License
Coaches who have earned a USSF National D License qualify for the USSF National C License.

NOTE: *Coaches who have earned a USSF **State** D License will have to take the current USSF National D License in order to earn a USSF National D License.*



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THE NEXT STEP.....

- Create a free coach's profile on the USSF Learning Center (LC) at learning.ussoccer.com
- Take the free online webinar, 'Introduction to Grassroots', through the USSF LC.
- NHSA holds Grassroot Blended In-person courses throughout the year. Most common time is prior to the start of the soccer seasons (March/April and July/August). Some courses are also held in the winter. Refer to the USSF LC for specific dates and locations. All registrations for NHSA hosted courses are conducted through the USSF LC.
- NHSA hosts one USSF National D License each year. The USSF National D License is a 40+ hours course that is presented in a blended format (asynchronous, virtual meetings, in-person meet) over 13 weeks. NHSA's hosted USSF National D License is held in the early spring (April) and summer (June). Refer to the USSF LC for specific dates and locations. All registrations for NHSA hosted courses are conducted through the USSF LC.
- Soccer clubs that are interested in hosting a USSF Grassroots Blended In-person License can contact Jeffrey Cousineau, at Jeffrey.cousineau@comcast.net, for more information.