



**USTA SOUTH CAROLINA TRI-LEVEL REGULATIONS**  
**18 & Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over**  
**League Year 2026**

**INTRODUCTION**

USTA South Carolina Tri-Level League Program is team competition in 18 & Over men and women 5.0-4.0, 4.5-3.5, 4.0-3.0, and 3.5-2.5 levels, 40 & Over men and women 4.5-3.5, 4.0-3.0 and women 3.5-2.5, and 55 & Over men and women 4.0-3.0. All State rules as outlined apply to all Age Groups unless otherwise noted. A player may compete in each Age Group in accordance with the appropriate rules.

USTA South Carolina has appointed the SC State League Coordinator to organize and coordinate all USTA Southern Tri-Level League activities in the South Carolina Tri-Level League and in conjunction with SC Adult Programs Committee shall have the authority to interpret the South Carolina Tri-Level League Tennis Regulations.

Local Leagues may write regulations to govern local play, but they may not conflict with USTA Southern Tri-Level Regulations or USTA South Carolina Tri-Level Regulations

A team shall consist of a minimum of 6 players which are able to combine to form an eligible pairing for each of the 3 lines for a team match.

All participants must reach 18 years of age prior to participating in the league. All players registering to play in the 40 & Over, and 55 & Over Age Groups must have reached the required minimum age prior to or during the calendar year in which such player participates in his or her first local league.

The format of play will be three individual men's or women's doubles matches per team match.

Local League Rules and Regulations must be approved by the SC State League Coordinator prior to the start of the Local League Season.

Local League Rules and Regulations must be available to Team Captains, along with USTA Southern Tri-Level Tennis Regulations, and USTA South Carolina Tri-Level Rules and Regulations before League Season begins.

**GENERAL**

**Membership**

All players must be current members of USTA through the Tri-Level Local League season, including Championship play.

**Rosters**

Rosters must be entered in TennisLink before League play begins. Players may not move to a different team once match play has begun for that level, unless approved by the SC State League Coordinator. Players may not be added to the team roster during local league flight playoffs or at any championship.

## LOCAL LEAGUE

**Singleton teams:** If any Adult Division in the 18 & Over, 40 & Over, or 55 & Over consists of only one team in a level of play, (singleton team), and that level must play a local league in order to advance, the Local League Coordinator has the option to:

- (1) Contact the SC State League Coordinator who can transfer an individual team with no local league play to another area's league tree only if it is agreed upon by both local league coordinators and accomplished before that recipient area's deadline.
  - Complete teams that are moved to play in a local league area other than their home local league must secure home courts in that local league they choose to participate unless both local league coordinators agree on something different.
  - If an individual team is transferred into an already existing league of at least 2 teams, then that team must secure home courts in that host local league where they have been moved and if that transferred team wins that league, they will represent that host league at the State Championship.
    - The transferred team must follow all rules and regulations of the host league.
    - The host league is responsible for all awards, state championship fees (if applicable) and state championship registration.
  - If Local League coordinators agree to combine individual teams from more than one area to form a league for those teams to qualify, the winning team from that individual league will be allowed to represent the Local League where they initially registered.
    - Rules and regulation issues that occur during league play for these individual teams will be handled by the SC State League Coordinator in consultation with the Local League coordinators that are involved.
    - The area that is represented by the winning team will be responsible for all awards, state championship fees (if applicable) and state championship registration for that team.
- (2) Offer to move that team to another age division offered in that area in that level, if applicable.
- (3) Move individual players to another team in that area, if applicable, or move them to an "Extra Players" flight to hold for future play in other leagues, i.e., Mixed, Combo, etc.
- (4) Refund or credit all or a portion of the registration fee in accordance with the Local League policy.

Local League at State Levels:

18 & Over	5.0-4.0 Women
	5.0-4.0 Men
40 & Over	4.5 – 3.5 Women
	4.0-3.0 Men
	4.5-3.5 Men
55 & Over	4.0-3.0 Women
	4.0-3.0 Men

### **Player Participation**

Players may play "up" one level (.5) within a Tri-Level match line-up. For example, a Tri-Level 18 & Over 4.0-3.0 team may place a 3.0 player in the #2 (3.5) and/or #3 (3.0) positions only.

Two team flights must play a minimum of three (3) matches.

## **Scoring**

The match format will be 2 out of 3 sets with a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of a 3<sup>rd</sup> set. The Coman Tiebreak will be used for all tie breaks.

**Procedure in the Event of a Tie for Local Play.** In the event of a tie, whether in round robin or single elimination, the state recommends that the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so (same as Championship Procedure)

- (1) Individual Matches. Winner of the most individual matches in the entire competition.
- (2) Head-to head. Winner of head-to-head match.
- (3) Sets. Loser of fewest number of sets.
- (4) Games. Loser of the fewest number of games.
- (5) Game Winning Percentage. Total games won divided by total games played.

The Local League may make a rule regarding the procedures in the event of a tie for local league play, but local league playoffs will defer to the above-mentioned procedure used in championships. This procedure must be approved by the SC State League Coordinator. If no rule is recorded for local league play, it will defer to the championship procedures in the event of a tie. (See above)

Local League playoffs are considered Championships, and not part of the local league. As such, players must have played 1 match (default received counts) in order to play in the local league playoffs.

## **Full Team Defaults**

- 1) Ineligibility to Advance: The defaulting team is ineligible to advance beyond local league play but must continue to play the remainder of the local matches.
- 2) Recording Matches: All matches played by the defaulting team will be recorded in TennisLink for the purpose of satisfying match play requirements for opponents only.
- 3) Removal of Matches: At the end of the local season, all matches of the defaulting team will be removed from the stats and standing in TennisLink, UNLESS:
  - a) More than one full round was played in a flight. If more than one round was played, only the matches in the affected flight will be removed.
  - b) All teams with a mathematical chance to advance have already played the defaulting team in good faith; the matches shall stand as played when determining standings.
  - c) The final standings would not be impacted by the matches played against the defaulting team.
- 4) Grievance Filing: A grievance may be filed against the defaulting team.

## **Substitutions and Retirements**

- 1) An individual match starts when the first ball is put in play. In the event of illness, injury, disqualification, or no-show of a player prior to the start of an individual match (once the lineup has been exchanged), a team may substitute a player in the affected position within the 15-minute default time, using a player not already listed on the lineup. If no such substitution can be made, the affected position will be forfeited in local leagues.
- 2) If a player is unable to complete a match that has already started due to injury, illness, or personal reasons, the score will be written as a retirement. Scores will be entered as they were at the time of retirement.
- 3) If a team match must be re-scheduled and starting times are staggered, where opponents are not available and ready to play, forfeits will be awarded in the affected position only.

## **Inclement Weather**

Local Leagues may make a rule regarding rescheduling matches due to inclement weather.

## PROGRESSION

### State Championships.

- 1) In the Tri-Level Divisions, a player is eligible to progress to the State Championship if that player has played on the same team in at least one match at the same NTRP level in the same Age Group during its local league season and is otherwise eligible.
- 2) All NTRP levels in the 18 & Over, 40 & Over, and 55 & Over Age Groups must play a local league in order to advance to State Championships except as noted in (4) below.
- 3) The winner of each specific NTRP level in each age division in local league competition shall be entitled to advance to the State Championship. The top two teams will be automatically invited when a level has 12-23 (12-23) teams. The top three teams will be automatically invited when a level has 24 or more teams. If the winning team is unable to attend, an alternate team, preferably the 2<sup>nd</sup> place team, can be asked to advance. Should the 2<sup>nd</sup> place team not be available to attend, then the 3<sup>rd</sup> place team from the Local League affected may be invited to advance to State Championships if approved by the SC State League Coordinator. If the 3<sup>rd</sup> place team from the affected Local League is unable to attend, then the wildcard procedure will be utilized to complete the draw. Wildcards will not be offered to areas who automatically receive 2 berths and areas with less than 4 teams in the division are not eligible to receive a wildcard.
- 4) The USTA SC Adult Programs Committee will determine which NTRP levels will play their local league at the State Championships. Legal team rosters for any levels playing their local league at the State Championship must be submitted by the initial league deadline date for the area in which the team is registering. Players must be registered on both the TennisLink roster and the Championship roster by the Championship Online Registration Deadline to participate in the Local League at State.
- 5) One default received counts as a qualifying match for State League Championship.
- 6) For all players involved, a retirement counts as a qualifying match for Tri-Level League State Championship.
- 7) The Championship Draw is a random draw done by the championship Tournament Director once local league competition is completed. If possible, teams from the same local league will be put in separate flights. The number of flights at a given level will depend on the number of teams eligible. The championship Tournament Director will determine if wildcards are needed to balance out the flights. The wildcards will be chosen by a weighted random draw, (i.e. one entry per local league team in that local league division). A flight typically will have four teams. Flights must have a minimum of four (4) teams to be eligible for a wildcard.
- 8) For all state championships, South Carolina may use round robin(s) or un-flighted matches against randomly selected opponents as their match formats. The use of multiple round robins or the use of un-flighted matches will require a playoff structure to establish a champion. Please refer to championship procedures for full details for that applicable championship.
- 9) Entry fee for State Tri-Level League Championships will be \$40.00 each time a player's name appears on a championship roster.
- 10) **Deposit Fee:** A \$300.00 Deposit from each team advancing to the championships is required and any team withdrawing from a championship after the deadline for online registration will be subject to a fine of \$300 per team, payable to USTA SC. **The deposit is to be submitted online at the time of team registration.** A grievance may be filed against the withdrawing team in addition to the \$300 fine.
- 11) Teams that withdraw from the championship after the online registration deadline date and before the draws are published will not be charged the \$300 deposit but may lose their registration fees if passed the individual withdrawal deadline. Teams that withdraw from the championship after the draws have been published will lose their \$300 deposit and their registration fees.
- 12) If a team defaults an individual court/line during the championship, the deposit will be collected and an administrative fee of \$100 per individual court will be deducted up to the full amount of the deposit.

- 13) Scheduling at Tri-Level League State Championships will not be able to accommodate players who compete on more than one team so players and/or teams should plan accordingly. All scheduled matches are expected to be played.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES.**

1. Grievance complaint forms, procedures and rules are posted on the SC Tennis Association website. There are specific time limits, procedures, and rules for filing a grievance. Grievance complaints may be filed not only for infractions of the regulations but also for failing to abide by good conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship. Such grievances must be filed by the captain in writing and emailed to the Local League Coordinator prior to commencement of the next team match involving such player or team or within 24 hours after the end of local league play, whichever occurs first, except a complaint based on ineligibility may be filed at any time after learning the player is ineligible.
2. A \$100 filing fee will be required for all General/Sportsmanship, Championship and/or Administrative Grievances. The filing fee will only be returned to the grieving party if the grievance is upheld.

### USTA South Carolina Local League Grievance and Grievance Appeals Committee – 2026

James Teal – Co-Chair Grievance Committee  
Scott Zobrist – Co-Chair Grievance Committee  
Debby Bosselman – Grievance Appeals Committee

#### Local League Representatives

Jonathan Watkins – BBTL  
Toni Odom – CTL  
Lauren Demosthenes – FTA  
Abby Martin – GATA  
Jessica Holmes – GSTL  
Sue Cook – HHTL  
Thea Salmonson – LATA  
Art Welling – LCTA  
Becky Williamson – LCTA  
Chris Jones – LCTA  
Stephanie Stanton – MCTA  
Linda Freeman – PD  
Frank Thompson – SATL  
Terry Kent – UPTA

Please note that a chairman and 2 committee members will be assigned to handle each grievance or grievance appeal but will not be assigned to any grievance or grievance appeal from their local area.

The decision of the Statewide Local League Grievance Committee may be appealed to the Statewide Local League Grievance Appeals Committee.

The decision of the Statewide Local League Grievance Appeals Committee is final and binding.

## **IMPORTANT DEADLINES:**

Tri-Level 18, 40, 55 & Over

- Registration opens: August 7
- Deadline for Minimum Required Registered and Online Team Deposit: September 2
- Wildcard Application turned in: September 2
- Wildcard Teams Selected: September 3
- Deadline for Minimum Required Registered for LLAS (TennisLink and Match Tennis Team) and Wildcard teams: September 4
- Deadline for Individual Registration Refunds: September 11
- Deadline for Permitted Team Withdrawal: Prior to draws being posted. Teams will be charged \$300 if they withdraw after the draws are posted.

## **CHAMPIONSHIP DATES AND LOCATIONS:**

2026 Tri-Level State Championships – September 18-20, 2026 – Sumter, SC

[2026 Tri-Level Sectional Championships](#)