
A Youth Club's Guide to FIFA Training Rewards

What the money is, whether your club qualifies, how the system actually works in 2026, and the five things every American youth club should do now. Written in plain English for club directors, registrars, and board members.

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Sources: FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players; FIFA Clearing House Regulations (January 2026 edition); FIFA's published Clearing House reporting (inside.fifa.com/transfer-system/clearing-house)

Please note: This guide describes rules and process. It is not legal advice.

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1. What This Money Is

FIFA's rules include two mechanisms that pay clubs for developing players. They exist because the clubs that train a future professional between the ages of 12 and 23 are considered to have earned a share of the value that player later generates. Both are written into FIFA's Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, which every national federation, league, and professional club in the world is bound by.

The solidarity mechanism (the recurring one)

When a professional player transfers between clubs in two different countries for a fee, 5% of that fee is carved out and split among every club that trained the player from age 12 to 23. The split is proportional to time: each season the club held the player between their 12th and 15th birthdays is worth 5% of the pool, and each season between their 16th and 23rd birthdays is worth 10% of the pool.

The part most people miss: solidarity recurs on every future paid transfer of that player, for their entire career. If a player you trained at 13 transfers for a fee at 21, again at 24, and again at 27, your club is owed a slice all three times. One well-documented alumnus can pay a club repeatedly for fifteen years.

Training compensation (the first-contract one)

When a player signs their first professional contract, or transfers internationally before the end of the season of their 23rd birthday, the clubs that trained them from age 12 to 21 are owed training compensation. The amounts are set by formula based on the new club's category; at the top European categories they can reach tens of thousands of dollars per training year, which is how single cases reach six figures.

Is this real money for clubs like yours?

Yes, and the numbers are public. In its first three years, the FIFA Clearing House allocated over \$520 million in training rewards to roughly 7,500 clubs in more than 120 countries, and has paid out over \$400 million. Almost 60% of those payments went to lower-league and amateur clubs. FIFA's own reporting highlights amateur clubs, including a century-old provincial club in Paraguay, receiving these payments for the first time in their existence. The machinery works, and it works for small clubs.

2. Does Your Club Qualify?

Three questions decide it, and the answers are friendlier than most American club directors assume.

Did you train the player between age 12 and 23? The clock starts in the season of the player's 12th birthday. Seasons before age 12 do not count, no matter how formative. Partial seasons count pro rata.

Are amateur, nonprofit, pay-to-play clubs eligible? Yes. This was tested in the most famous American case: when Tottenham Hotspur argued that a Seattle youth club's pay-to-play business model should disqualify it from solidarity payments for DeAndre Yedlin, FIFA's Dispute Resolution Chamber rejected that argument and held the club was entitled. Your registration fees do not disqualify you. Fully-funded MLS academies participate in this same system; independent clubs are equally eligible under the rules.

Was the triggering move international, with a fee (or a first pro contract)? This is the limiting question, covered in Section 4, because it is where honest expectations get set.

3. How the System Works Now (It Changed in 2022)

For twenty years, a training club had to know its rights, find out about a transfer, and file a claim, usually with a lawyer. Most American clubs never did, and many that tried failed on incomplete records. In November 2022, FIFA replaced that world with the FIFA Clearing House: an independent, regulated financial institution that identifies payments automatically and moves the money itself.

Here is the entire process, with the deadlines that matter to you in bold:

Step	What happens	Your club's role
1. Trigger	A player transfers internationally for a fee, or signs a first professional contract. FIFA's systems detect it automatically from registration data.	None yet, but knowing your alumni means you see it coming.
2. Provisional Electronic Player Passport (EPP)	FIFA compiles the player's registration history from age 12 into a draft passport, from data declared by national federations.	10-day inspection window. Check whether your club and seasons appear. If you are missing, your federation must be asked to request your inclusion, and the rules require it to respond in good faith.
3. Review	Clubs and federations can correct or challenge the draft.	15-day review window. Corrections must be submitted through your national federation, with a registration document issued by the federation as evidence.
4. Final EPP and Allocation Statement	FIFA finalizes the passport and calculates exactly who is owed what.	Appeal window if wrong; otherwise final and binding.

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5. Compliance onboarding	Every club named for payment completes a financial compliance check (similar to opening a bank account) through FIFA's online portal.	Register within 15 days of the invitation. A first failure can be cured within 6 months. A second failure forfeits the money entirely.
6. Payment	The paying club sends funds to the Clearing House within 30 days; the Clearing House pays each training club directly.	Have a club bank account in order. Get paid.

The single most important rule in this guide: under the January 2026 regulations, a player's **first** final EPP is binding on every future EPP of their career. If your seasons with a player are missing or wrong the first time that player triggers the system, the error follows them through every future transfer, and so does your missing money. Readiness before the first trigger is worth more than any effort after it.

4. What Pays and What Does Not (The Honest Section)

Setting expectations correctly protects your club's time and this guide's credibility, so here is the unvarnished map:

- **Pays:** international transfers of your former players for a fee, at any point in their career until well past their prime, via solidarity. First professional contracts and international moves before the season of their 23rd birthday, via training compensation, subject to the women's football note below.
- **Does not pay:** purely domestic moves. A player going from your club to an MLS academy, an MLS academy to an MLS first team, or between American clubs generates no FIFA money under current rules, because FIFA's system governs international movement and leaves domestic systems to each federation. The United States does not currently operate a domestic training compensation system.
- **Does not pay (yet), part two:** training compensation does not currently apply in women's football. FIFA's Council approved a governing framework in December 2023 and consultation is ongoing. However, **solidarity on women's international transfers already flows:** the Clearing House has issued women's allocation statements, and women's international transfer fees are rising quickly. When the training compensation framework switches on, the clubs whose records are already in order will collect first. If your club has a strong girls' program history, that history is a dormant asset. Treat it like one.

- **Small amounts get discarded:** individual entitlements under 100 euros are dropped. A club's realistic value usually comes from a portfolio of alumni over the years, not one player, though one star alumnus can be significant on their own.
- **Old cases are harder:** transfers from before November 2022 fall outside the automated system and into traditional dispute channels. Some are worth pursuing; many are not. Anyone who tells you every old transfer is buried treasure is selling something.

5. The Five Things Your Club Should Do Now

1. **Build your alumni list.** Every former player who became a professional, played overseas, plays Division I with pro potential, or is a current standout. Names, birth years, and the seasons they were registered with you. Board members' and veteran coaches' memories are a real data source; write them down before they retire.
2. **Inventory your records.** For each alumni-list player: what documentation do you hold of their registration with your club, season by season? Rosters, registration confirmations, league records, payment records. Gaps are normal; knowing where they are is the point.
3. **Check your club's registration continuity.** Has your club merged, renamed, or reorganized? The entity that trained the player and the entity that exists today must be connectable in registration records, or the claim gets complicated. Clubs with merger history should resolve this before a trigger, not during a 15-day window.
4. **Watch your triggers.** Follow your professional alumni's careers. Any international move is a potential event. Set the expectation internally that when one happens, the club acts within days, not months, because the windows in Section 3 do not wait.
5. **When a window opens, act immediately.** Contact your state association and US Soccer's Player Status Department at once, in writing, requesting confirmation that your club's training seasons appear in the player's EPP, and requesting the federation-issued registration documentation the review process requires. If you have help, this is the moment to use it.

6. Straight Answers to Fair Questions

Realistically, how much money are we talking about?

For a typical independent club's share of a typical MLS-export transfer: often four to low five figures per event, recurring on future transfers. Meaningful to a volunteer-run nonprofit, not life-changing, with the genuine upside sitting in star alumni, portfolio effects over years, and the women's rules change ahead. Anyone quoting you a big number before checking the records is guessing.

Is our club allowed to pursue this? We heard American clubs got in trouble for trying.

The era you heard about predates the Clearing House. FIFA's tribunal affirmed American clubs' entitlement a decade ago, MLS academies openly participate in the same system, and the automated regime removed the need for the adversarial claims that caused the old friction. Being present and accurate in a FIFA data process is not a hostile act; it is bookkeeping.

What if our club merged or renamed since the player left?

Common, solvable, and best solved early. See Section 5, step 3. The successor entity generally carries the claim if the registration lineage is documented.

What does help cost?

Ours: nothing up front, ever. A free audit of your alumni and records, an honest read on what exists, and if money is ever secured for your club, a contingency percentage of what actually arrives. If the honest answer is that nothing is owed, you will know for certain, for free, with your records in better shape than we found them.

Can we just do this ourselves?

Yes, and this guide is designed to let you. The rules are public, the federation is obligated to respond in good faith, and no law requires an intermediary. What a service adds is monitoring you do not have time for, evidence assembly before the clock starts, and someone whose job is to never miss a 10-day window. Use whichever path fits your club.

7. The One-Sentence Version

FIFA built a machine that pays clubs like yours automatically when your former players succeed abroad; the machine reads registration records; and the only question that matters is whether your club's history is in the record, correctly, before the first time it counts. Everything in this guide serves that one sentence.

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