



SOCA Suspension of Activities due to COVID-19 Virus

SOCA family,

Following the advice of local medical authorities SOCA is suspending all activities through April 5, effective immediately. The SOCA Board of Directors and staff will continually assess our situation and local public health status and make a further determination on April 1 whether activities will resume the week of April 6, or be further delayed. The spread of the COVID-19 virus is a rapidly evolving event with unknown impact and duration.

SOCA takes seriously its responsibility to care for the well-being of our players, coaches, referees, volunteers and families. We further understand our impact on, and responsibility to, the wider community. SOCA is broadly woven into local and surrounding communities and therefore we must earnestly consider the impact of the decision to suspend activities.

Based on expert medical advice, the best strategy for limiting the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the community is to avoid group gatherings, crowds and social contact. SOCA's suspension of activities will break a substantial potential chain of virus transmission.

We have received guidance from the Medical Director of the Emergency Management Department at the UVA Hospital as well as UVA's Director of Epidemiology, Infectious Diseases and International Health and believe our plan to immediately suspend activity is the responsible and proper action. We have been assured that the virus is likely present in our community, and will spread, making people ill. There is no need to panic, but there is cause for appropriate immediate action to contain the spread. COVID-19 is highly contagious and is easily transmitted. The large majority of those who contract the disease will recover without incident. Young, healthy people are at low risk for serious medical complications, while older people and those with chronic health conditions are at increased risk. The outdoor nature of SOCA's activities reduces but does not eliminate the risk of transmission.

We intend to resume soccer programming as soon as it is safe to do so. We'll use all available resources to reschedule activities by using alternative days, dates and times as necessary and possible. SOCA will maintain communication and provide updates to our various constituents as the situation changes and information becomes available. The specific impact on all our various programs will be examined and the plans for each will be communicated by the program directors and coordinators.

Virtually all of SOCA's partners and affiliates are similarly suspending and cancelling activities. All the impacts on league and tournament play are not yet known. The full effects of the COVID-19 virus spread are not known at this time. Travel leagues, which include multiple communities across wide geographic areas, will be disrupted and ongoing assessment will take place.

We certainly understand that families will be concerned about fees paid to SOCA. Our intention at this point is to provide programming in full or in part, as best we are able, under these global crisis

conditions. Many of SOCA's costs associated with running the season are sunk at this point. The complete effect and impact of the pandemic are simply not known at this time and there is a reasonable likelihood of further suspension of activities as the disease spreads. Each of SOCA's programs will be examined in the coming month(s) to determine the ability to proceed. We are not in a position to provide any refunds until the full impact of the emergency is known. We thank you for your understanding and patience as we monitor the event. Whatever decision is made on potential refunds would be done on a league wide basis rather than individually or case by case.

All community members are encouraged to adhere to good hygiene and sanitation guidelines. Wash hands frequently, avoid hand-to-hand contact with others, don't touch your hands to your face, avoid crowds and gatherings, sanitize frequently touched surfaces often, stay home if ill, cover all coughs and sneezes, don't share water bottles, drinks or food.

While members of the community are likely to become sick from the virus, few will have serious complications. By following accepted practices, the spread of the disease can be contained and its impact reduced. We look forward to being with our SOCA family again after the pandemic has passed.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

In good health,

Matt Wilson
SOCA Executive Director