



Lisburn Castlereagh Junior League
League Rules
Season 2025/2026

www.lcjil.co.uk



AFFILIATED TO
NORTHERN IRELAND YOUTH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
www.niyfa.co.uk



LEAGUE RULES

1. REGISTRATION OF CLUBS

All Clubs/Teams must register their players and management teams by submitting details (including; up-to-date photographs of all players) on the IFA Comet registration system. Any changes to the original details recorded must be updated within two working days of such change.

2. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION/DEPOSIT/PAYMENTS

- a) The annual subscription of each club shall be determined by The League Committee. In addition, each club shall deposit a sum of money, the amount to be set by The League committee, which will be liable to forfeiture at the end of the season if a Club has failed to complete its League Fixtures or leave the league; in season, or has debts outstanding to the league.
- b) The deposit is recoverable by Clubs who wish to leave the league and who have fulfilled all their league fixtures and have no outstanding debts to the league.
- c) The annual subscription and the deposit (where not already held by The League) must be paid on or before the date notified to the Club by the League Committee. No refund will be paid to any team who subsequently withdraw team/s from the league after accepting place/s offered.
- d) Any club in default of their obligations for pitch costs for more than 30 days having been issued with a league invoice for same may be suspended from playing further games in all NIYFA Affiliated leagues and competitions until that account is settled. The club may also forfeit any fixtures scheduled between Day 30 and settlement of the account. The club may also be responsible for all costs associated with suspended/forfeited games (including pitch hire, officials and evidenced travel arrangements of opponents) where these have been irrecoverably incurred by the League or the opposition team).
- e) Any club or team therein in default of their financial obligations to the league will not be permitted to join another league, until all its debts to The League have been settled.
- f) All clubs must pay their disciplinary monetary sanctions via the IFA Comet System on issue.

3. LEAGUE FORMAT

- a) The League Committee will determine the format of the league on an annual basis.

Promotion and Relegation (if applicable) shall apply between the Divisions of the League. As a minimum the team that finishes bottom of a Division of any League shall be relegated to a lower Division (where there is one) and the relegated number of teams replaced by team/s from the Division to which they teams were relegated in order of highest finishing positions/s within that lower division.

Where teams who participated in a league in the previous season have withdrawn from that league, they will be placed at the bottom of the previous season division table and treated as a relegated team. Promotion and relegation will then be carried out accordingly when organising the league structure for the following season.

The League shall give consideration to any team, who did not finish in the relegation places, who makes a request to play in a lower division in any following season due to specific circumstances (i.e.: outward player movement).

Where new team/s are accepted into a League in any given season, the League shall work to determine which division would be best suited to the new teams perceived ability level based on the facts available (including results from leagues where the team participated in the previous season, performance levels of other teams from the same club, etc). No existing team within the proposed division of the new team/s (including those relegated from a higher division or those promoted from a lower division) shall be

adversely impacted by the accommodation of a new team.

The league will always hold the right to appoint the venue for all fixtures and clubs.

- b) The team listed first will be designated the home team.
- c) Three points will be awarded for a win and one for a draw.
- d) In the case of an equal number of points being accrued the head-to-head results between the teams will be a deciding factor in all league competitions. Where more than two teams are involved in a points tie, the points accrued from the collective results of the teams involved will prevail. If still tied a play-off system of games will be arranged between those teams who finish in first position on the same points in the collective results system.
- e) Goal difference will not apply to league positions.
- f) Play-offs will only take place, where necessary, to determine league winners, runners-up (where applicable), divisional split, or relegation.
- g) Failure to participate in a play-off will incur forfeiture of the match and loss of deposit.
- h) Teams failing to complete a league season and who have played less than 50% of their scheduled matches will have all previous results expunged and unfilled fixtures cancelled.
Teams failing to complete a league season but who have completed 50% or more of their scheduled fixtures, their scheduled opponents will have a 3-0 win awarded to them for all remaining unplayed fixtures.

4. **AGE QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS**

- a) All competitions will be open to players who meet the qualifying dates as stated on the league application form. Teams wishing to play female players in mixed football (will be granted a concession of playing a female player in an age group 1 year below her date of birth across all age groups). The NIYFA will then issue an electronic ID Card (e-ID) as players with a one-year concession cannot be selected via Comet on match day. Note; in same gender matches this concession does not apply unless a player meets the concession criteria noted below.

Also, and in exceptional circumstances *consideration* will be given to applications from young players with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities to gain concession to participate in an age group of one year below their current age band. The procedure is as follows.

- b) The player assisted by his/her parent/guardian seeks membership of an NIYFA affiliated member club.
- c) The parent or guardian, with support from the club should then apply to NIYFA c/o gerry@niyfa.co.uk or william@niyfa.co.uk , for a dispensation for the player to participate at a younger age group. This application must be supported with a letter from a relevant professional confirming clear and concise medical details and why they cannot play at their own age group e.g., Physiotherapist, School Teacher, Doctor etc.
- d) The matter will then be considered by a panel consisting of members from Disability Sport NI, The Irish FA and a member of NIYFA. On reaching a decision the applicant, their club and league will receive a copy of the decision from NIYFA which will be final and binding on all parties.
- e) If permission is granted, the club should then register the player on Comet. The NIYFA will then issue an electronic ID Card (e-ID) as players with a one-year concession cannot be selected via Comet on match day.
- f) If the player moves to another league a copy of the letter of permission must be sent to the secretary of that league.

- g) If the player moves clubs in season a new application must be submitted following the process outlined in the Rules.
- h) Any dispensation will be monitored throughout the season and may be rescinded. Any dispensation granted must be renewed annually.

5. **PLAYERS, SQUADS AND ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS**

- a) All players must be registered in accordance with the IFA Amateur Game Player Registration Regulations and the NIYFA Player Registration Regulations. Please click on the following link to view the Regulations: Please refer to IFA Player Registration Regulations for further guidance, the document is available on your league website.
- b) Teams will be limited to a maximum of twenty (20) players to any age group in any season but in addition may call on players at any time from an age group below for purposes of player development. To facilitate this development opportunity any such player should be restricted to playing for those age groups either immediately 1 year or 2 years above the age group for which he or she qualifies. For the sake of clarity under 12 players will also be permitted to play at U13 & U14, an U13 player will also be permitted to play at U14 & U15 etc. In all cases it is the responsibility of coaches and parents to assess the player is physically capable of meeting the demands of an older age group.

- (i) In 9 a-side and 11-a-side football, any member/player of a specific club (subject to standard age criteria being met) may only play in Knockout Cup Competitions associated with a league for one team. Players who complete in-season transfers shall not be permitted to play in such competitions in the same League if they have previously appeared in the competition in the season in question for their previous club.

For League matches, there shall be free movement of members/players within teams from the same age group, however no Club shall be allowed to play:

- (a) More than three (3) recognised National League/NIFL Youth League Grade Players in any match of another league. A recognised National League/NIFL Youth League Grade Player is one who has taken part in more than eight (8) National League/NIFL Youth League matches during the current season.
- (b) And or list on the matchday team sheet more than three (3) recognised National League/NIFL Youth League Grade players in any match. A recognised National League//NIFL Youth League Grade Player is one who has taken part in more than eight (8) National League/NIFL Youth League matches during the current season.
- (c) In both of the above (point a & b) instances, each individual National League/NIFL Youth League Grade Player should not play and/or be named in more than eight (8) league games of any other league association.
- (ii) Players who are aged one or two years below the age group of a competition may move freely between leagues for League games only.
- c) Match Day team sheets generated by Comet MUST include the club officials name, player's photographs or in exceptional circumstances a laminated ID card for each player as per Rule 3 Age Qualifications of Players. Teams who fail to have all their clubs' players photographs visible on matchday will be fined £20 for each offence (missing photograph) and if subsequent checks prove any player to be ineligible the offending team will forfeit the result of the relevant match with all resultant expenses charged. The League reserves the right to make the necessary checks and where a team or teams are in default of their obligations the League will apply this sanction even if the match has been played.
- d) (i) Clubs can request to transfer the registration of a maximum of TWO players from the same team within any other Club in any league in any season. However, teams also have the right to losing a maximum of two

players via transfer in any season and block any further request for the transfer of their registered players. This is to retain stability within team/s during a season.

- (ii) If a Club seeks to obtain the transfer of a registration of a player from another Club ~~Team~~, they shall do so in accordance with the IFA Amateur Player Registration Regulations. All transfers shall be considered in line with Rule 5 d (i).

Only players who are listed on a matchday team sheet on COMET are permitted to take part in League matches. Rule 4a shall also be applicable.

- (iii) Consent shall not be unreasonably withheld. Subject to clause 5d (i).
- (iv) In the event of the transferring club consenting to the transfer of the registration of the player the process must be completed on Comet.
- (v) If a club voluntarily chooses to release a player who is deemed surplus to requirements during the playing season, the club must NOT terminate the registration on Comet. The club must contact the NIYFA directly. Such actions will be limited to The League's registration dates up to and including 31st March in any season.
- (vi) In addition to the registration of a player by way of a transfer as outlined in clause 5.d (i), a club shall be free to sign a "released player" subject to the conditions laid out in clause 5.b.
- (e) Players in any League will be permitted to register for their club if applicable to attain eligibility to play in the Northern Ireland Football League (NIFL) Academy League (subject to the conditions as noted in paragraphs 5b (i) and 5b (ii). Such players are insured by the NIYFA insurance scheme if the club for which they are playing is affiliated to and insured in the NIYFA Scheme. NIFL teams are subject to the rules pertaining to cup competitions of the Northern Ireland Youth Football Association.
- (f) Club managers must submit their team line-up on COMET this can be done either the day prior to or up to 15 minutes before a match-on-match day (please refer to Rule 5.c). This is the starting eleven players along with a maximum of five substitutes for an 11 a-side match and nine plus 5 substitutes for 9 a-side games. The Head Coach must have their selection made so the referee can identify players accordingly with regards to cautions and dismissals that may occur during a game. Player shirt numbers MUST match the COMET team selection.
- (g) Any Team fielding an ineligible player will forfeit the match and be deducted a further three points and a monetary fine for each offence. Team officials will also be subject to relevant disciplinary procedures. In such instances a 3-0 win will be awarded to the opposing team.
- (h) Clubs infringing registration rules will be reported to the Irish Football Association.
- (i) In all cases relating to the registration of players, clubs are obliged to make initial personal contact with the Club of the player they wish to sign and not unsettle any player by use of peer pressure or any social media, including but not exclusive to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, text, or email. Failure to comply with the conditions laid out in this rule will result in disciplinary action.
- (j) Clubs must respect the position of all teams and refrain from disrupting their season by unsettling players (this includes contacting a player directly via face-to-face meetings, phone calls, text messages and email/social networking websites) to sign players.

Any reported and subsequently proven instances that breach this process may result in the club's ability to sign players being suspended and/or a league points deduction up to a maximum of six points.

- (k) No club shall induce or attempt to induce a player to become registered as a player by that club by offering him, or person connected with him, either directly or indirectly, a benefit or payment of any description whether in cash or kind. No player shall, either directly or indirectly, accept any such inducement, the burden of proof will lie with the complaining club.

- (l) Please note that any player needing to wear glasses will be required to use the appropriate prescription approved safety glasses.

6. **MONITORS**

The League will monitor games and have the authority to check the registrations of players and officials- and to monitor the conduct and behaviour of players, officials and supporters at any match. Such information gathered may be used as evidence in any subsequent NIYFA disciplinary proceedings.

7. **FIXTURES**

a) All matches shall be played according to the Laws of the Game as adopted by the IFAB with the following qualifications.

Clubs will play two equal periods of not less than:

- i. 25 minutes duration for all 7/9 a-side games
- ii. 30 minutes duration for U13s
- iii. 35 minutes duration for U14s, U15s U16s, U17s & 18s

Match Ball:

- a. Up to and including U13 – Size 4
- b. Under 14 to Under 18 inclusive – Size 5

Where practical, at venues that do not have perimeter spectator fencing, a roped barrier must be erected for at least 25 metres each side of the halfway line at a match. Only coaching staff with the approved ID visible on Comet or league approved ID badges displayed will be authorised to be pitch side of the spectator fencing or roped barrier. (Please refer to Rule 5.d).

Where possible and if not otherwise defined, a technical area marked by cones should be set out no more than 5 Metres each side of the halfway line and a minimum of 1 meter back from the touchline. All coaching staff MUST remain within that area, except for player injuries or other unlikely events. Walking the touchline or encroaching onto the field of play will not be permitted. In instances where management are on the same side of the pitch that area should be a 10-metre space set out centrally in their half of the pitch.

- b) All league fixtures will be available on the relevant League website, COMET and NI Football App (see cover page for details).

These games shall be played on the date stipulated unless changed by prior agreement.

Changes (not cancellations) by a club to a fixture will require a minimum of 96 hours' notice and must be notified to and approved by the league in that time frame. Any change to the match arrangements to be notified by the league will be done no later than 24 hours before the scheduled kick off time subject to the condition that Leagues are liable to changes after this 24-hour period by facility providers. In such instances these changes will be notified to clubs at the earliest opportunity.

- c) If a club wishes to be excused from playing on any date/s throughout the season, the club must make such a request to the league by phone/text and confirm in writing/email not less than 14 days in advance of the date requested. No team shall be allowed more than two such requests in a season.
- d) In extraordinary circumstances (death of a club official, player, or immediate family member of such official or player), relief of fixture may be granted not less than five days before the date stipulated on application to the League. Any Club seeking relief of fixture less than five days before the date stipulated shall be responsible for any relevant match fees incurred by their opponents for the listed fixture on receipt of proof of such fees.
- e) Any Club that cancels a fixture within 24 hours of Kick-off time will forfeit the match and all associated fees unless such a cancellation is in relation to a death of a club official, player, or immediate family member of such official or player. All other forfeitures or non-fulfilment of fixtures will incur loss of deposit, and a possible additional points deduction in the current season.

- f) Forfeiting a game as per League Rule 7(e) will incur a fine of £100. A second forfeited game for any team in same season will incur another fine of £200 and expulsion from the league for a minimum of two years.
- g) All Teams will be expected to arrive for their match at least 30 minutes prior to kick-off to allow for proper match preparation. Kick-off must take place no later than 20 minutes after the appointed time. However, if the Teams agree to play the match, outside of these time limits the result of the match will stand as a valid result and the defaulting team will incur no penalty. Such situations must be verified by the match referee on the match summary.
- h) In matches organised by the League, rolling substitutions will be permitted, in the following manner:

For all Teams participating in competitions of The League, any player who has been substituted, himself becomes a substitute and may replace another player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of Association Football.

- (i) Law 3—the Number of Players.
 - (ii) A match is played by two Teams, each normally consisting of 11 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either Team consists of fewer than seven players. A match is played by two Teams, each normally consisting of 9 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either Team consists of fewer than seven players. A match is played by two Teams, each normally consisting of 7 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either Team consists of fewer than five players. The rules of the competition must state how many substitutes may be nominated; for all matches organised under the jurisdiction of The League a maximum of five (5) substitutes may be used.
- i) Substitution Procedure — to replace a player by substitution, the following conditions must be observed:
- (i) The referee is informed before any proposed substitution is made.
 - (ii) A substitute only enters the field of play after the player being replaced has left and after receiving a signal from the referee.
 - (iii) A substitute only enters the field of play at the halfway line and during a stoppage in the match.
 - (iv) A substitution is completed when a substitute enters the field of play. From that moment, the substitute becomes a player and the player he has replaced is now a substitute.
 - (v) All substitutes are subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the referee, whether called upon to play or not.
 - (vi) A substitute that does not take to the field of play in a cup competition of any league will not be cup tied the onus will be on the club to prove the player did not play.
- In all matches clubs may play five (5) substitutes from five (5) substitutes listed on the COMET matchday team sheet.
- j) The Home or First Named Team Club must telephone, text/SMS or WhatsApp the League/Fixtures Secretary the result of all League Matches scheduled immediately after the match or notify of any postponement immediately the information is known on any match day. Clubs failing to comply with this rule will be fined £5 per offence by the League.
 - (k) Clubs who wish to video games for their own performance analysis purposes should request and receive permission to do so from their opposition at least 24 hours before the game concerned. This is to comply with good safeguarding practice. Any such video content must be released to the Disciplinary Committee should they request same and shared with the opposition if requested.

8. **VENUE & NOTIFICATION**

In the event of The League appointing a match venue the notification of the venue will appear on COMET and the NI Football App. If a club makes a venue booking, then The League and travelling club MUST be notified as soon as possible before the scheduled date for the fixture to enable the website notices to be verified or updated.

Clubs should make themselves aware of the location of match venues listed and seek guidance from the league if so required. The League will have the power to decide whether facilities are suitable for matches in the competition and to order the Club concerned to play its fixtures on another ground. The League reserves the right to move any game to a neutral venue. Match kick-off times shall be determined by the league.

In all matches league and cup played under the jurisdiction of the league the accommodating authority or home team will ensure that suitable changing accommodation facilities are available for all teams. The home or first named Team will be responsible for the provision of at least two quality match footballs of appropriate size as described in Rule 7(a).

9. **REFEREES**

Appointed referees will be advised by the Referees' Co-ordinator of the necessary match details, location, and kick-off time either directly or via Comet. Where referees are appointed by the league no club may object to any referee so appointed. Where a referee fails to attend the Teams will toss a coin for the appointment of an official. This applies to all League and cup competitions.

Referee's Fee:

- a) the referee's fee shall be decided by the League Committee and shall be shared equally by both clubs in all competitions played under the jurisdiction of The League. Failure to pay will incur the referee fee due and a further fine of £15.
- b) In the case of non-fulfilment of any fixture, except under (c) below, the defaulting team's club shall pay the referee's fee.
- c) Should a ground be considered unplayable, the referee shall after confirmation of the same with the local authority representative, grounds man or other club appointee responsible for grounds maintenance, receive half fee which shall be shared equally by each club.

10. **COLOURS**

- a) Each Team in The League shall register its colours to the league and must also submit their playing kit colours on COMET match days so that opposition and referee officials are aware of any possible clashes. Clubs must not use kit branded with any form of alcohol, tobacco, or gambling promotion logo.
- b) In the event of a clash of colours the visiting Team shall play in their registered colours and The Home or first named Team shall change unless mutually agreed.

11. **UNFINISHED GAMES**

- a) Results for matches that are abandoned because of inclement weather having played a minimum of 80% of the scheduled time of the match will stand.
- b) The status of matches that are abandoned because of inclement weather having played less than 80% of the scheduled time will be decided by The League.
- c) Where a match is abandoned due to a serious injury to a participant, the referee shall report the nature of the circumstances to the league who shall decide the most appropriate course of action.

- d) The status of all other matches that are abandoned or unfinished shall be determined as part of any disciplinary process with reference to the Disciplinary Code.

12. MATCH POSTPONEMENTS

- a) Where venues have been appointed by the League in conjunction with a local authority it will be the final decision of the local authority as to the fitness of the ground for play.
- b) In cases where the Home Team has a registered venue not owned or controlled by local authority it will be the decision of the Home Team grounds man or another club appointee responsible for grounds maintenance in the first instance to decide on the fitness of the ground for play or failing such then the decision of the referee will be final. The league will have the right to appoint a venue in the event of a "Home" venue not being available up to 24 hours ahead of the scheduled match time.
- c) The home club must immediately inform The League, referee and visiting club if a postponement is necessary, in default of which the home club if an alternative venue cannot be arranged may at the discretion of the league be required to pay half of the referee's match fee and the travelling expenses, in whole or part of the visiting club.
- d) The reason for the non-fulfilment of any fixture shall be investigated by the League and if the reasons are deemed to be unsatisfactory, the defaulting club may forfeit the points and pay the referee's fee, in addition, a fine not exceeding £50 may be imposed, the whole or part of which may be awarded to the aggrieved club. All fines imposed under this rule must be paid as notified within 14 days from receipt of defaulting letter.

13. MATCH PRIORITY

Competitions of the NIYFA shall have precedence over all other League competitions and any postponed fixtures are to be rearranged subject to the 14-day notification rule of NIYFA to The League.

14. REPRESENTATIVE GAMES

- a) The League shall have the power to select player/s from any Team, to represent The League. Such representation shall be on a voluntary basis and no penalty for non-participation shall ensue.
- b) A team may apply for a postponement of a league fixture should two or more players including (a goalkeeper) be selected to play in a League, NIYFA or IFA representative game.

15. LEAGUE TROPHIES

Trophies for the League Championship shall be presented to the respective winners. In The League the maximum number of medals that will be issued to any team will be limited to 20. In competitions other than the league championship a trophy and medals will be awarded to the winners unless the actual number of players registered is less than 20 and medals will be awarded to the runners-up.

16. CUP, PLATE & SUPPLEMENTARY COMPETITIONS

- a) The League rules shall apply with the following additions and amendments.
- b) Competitions will be played on the "Cup-tie", Home and Away, sectional, or other principle as may be determined by the committee the League will always hold priority on the selection of venues for all ties including finals. In the event of the score being level in any cup-tie after the stipulated playing time has been completed, extra time will be played. Should the score remain level after the stipulated period of extra time is completed then the result of the tie will be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the "Laws of the Game".
Note: Based on match schedules and availability of facilities individual Leagues may opt out of offering extra time in their domestic competitions.

- c) Any club refusing or failing to play the club against which it is drawn within the time notified to it, and without enough reason for doing so, shall be liable for disqualification.
- d) Any club intending to forfeit a game must give notice to the Secretary of the opposing club and the Fixtures Secretary at least three days before the date of the tie. The defaulting club may be liable for the expenses of the tie and be subject to further sanctions including expulsion from The League.
- e) The League Committee shall fix the venue for the final tie and shall have direct control of all arrangements, receipts and donations made from funds raised in connection therewith.
- f) No player shall play for two teams in the same age group. In 9 a-side and 11-a-side football, any member/player of a specific club (subject to standard age criteria being met) may only play in the Cup Competitions of one league subject to in season transfers to a new club in a new league. Transferred players will then become eligible for the competitions of their new League.
- g) In all cup-tie matches the duration of play is as defined in Rule 7 (a) for the age group concerned. In 9- a-side competitions and subject to available facilities the League may remove the option to offer extra time in any or all Cup matches. Extra time if offered will consist of five (5) minutes each way for 9 aside matches and ten (10) minutes each way for 11 aside matches.
- h) In the event of a tie in a league format cup competition then the outcome will be determined by head to head results and if still equal a play-off will be arranged. In all League Cup, Plate/Shield or Supplementary competitions where a postponement occurs, the Team drawn at home initially will have the opportunity to arrange the game on one further occasion thereafter the away team will, in conjunction with the league, facilitate the tie. Each switch of responsibility will permit Teams two opportunities to host the game.

All cup-ties will be played to a finish at the first time of asking.

17 **BREACH OF LEAGUE RULES**

Any breach of League rules by any player, official or club will be dealt with by the League in line with its rules and the sanctions laid out within.

18. **PLAYER WELFARE**

NIYFA and the league recommend that all clubs act to cease repetitive training techniques for heading a football for players aged 11 years and younger.

It is accepted that in a training/match situation heading a football is a potential consequence of any passage of play. This recommendation seeks to address concerns that repetitive heading practice may potentially have a long-term adverse effect on the brain.

19. **OPEN TRIALS**

Many clubs now use social media to advertise and bring players to their clubs, many of these highlight that players need to get permission from their current club. That is not the case, the rule states quite clearly that it must be a club-to-club agreement. The rule is to standardise open trials and or training and avoid conflict and animosity between teams.

As of the Second Monday in May until the opening of the registration window annually, clubs will be free to arrange and players free to attend open trials and training without first seeking permission from their current club. Players will not be permitted to sign for any new club before 16th June, but clubs wishing to re-register their existing players

may do so before 30th June with consent of the players parents. Advertising of the same must not commence before May Day Monday Bank Holiday in any season.

Note this does not apply to players who are registered to play in a summer league, in those cases the form at Annexe 3 must be agreed and completed prior to any trial. Players registered in summer leagues will be free to attend open trials in January in any season but this applies to players and teams registered to participate in the summer league only.

Clubs who make trial arrangements before the above dates must submit a signed agreement approving participation for any player registered to another club in any league and submit copies of that agreement to the league/leagues of the clubs concerned. See Template agreement on your league website.

20. **INTERPRETATION**

The League Committee shall be the final authority of the interpretation of the Rules, decisions upon questions of interpretation and on matters affecting the league not provided for by the Rules shall be final and binding on all members.