



To Members of the EFA

Circular No. 218

Mbabane, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## **Registration of Players and Clubs for the 2024/2025 Football Season**

All registration offices of the Members of the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) and football clubs are hereby informed that the two Registration Periods for the forthcoming 2024/2025 football season shall be as follows:

### ***First Window Registration Period***

The first window registration period, being the main period for registration for the season, will commence on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and will close on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Players who may qualify to be registered outside the First Window Registration Period shall have registered by the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024, at the latest.

In view of the first window registration period and in terms of the provisions of the FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players, on the authority of the EFA as a member association of FIFA, relating to this subject and to safeguard the integrity of competitions under the auspices of the EFA, no player shall be allowed to register after the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024, even if the player qualifies to be registered outside the first window registration period. This implies that the final date for registration of players, even if they meet all the criteria to be registered outside the first window registration period shall be Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024; unless on account of the exceptional circumstances outlined in this circular, under the section exceptional circumstances for the registration of a player or players outside the registration window period.

### ***Second Window Registration Period***

The second window registration period shall commence on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and close on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025. Like in the case of the first window registration period, no registration of players shall be allowed after Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025, even if the player qualifies to be registered outside the registration period; unless on account of the exceptional circumstances outlined in this circular.

### ***No new football clubs Registration of Football clubs***

New clubs are still not allowed to register as per the directive of the EFA at the instance of the abolishment of sister teams or clubs under a common ownership. Only applications by zones may be allowed and such applications must be sent to the office of the EFA and in this respect EFA reserves the right for granting membership to a league or new club to participate in competitions under the auspices of the EFA.

*This also applies to clubs that may wish to apply for change of names, whose approval shall only be the preserve of the EFA, in conformity with the principle of promotion and relegation as prescribed in the regulations governing the application of EFA Statutes.*

### ***Football clubs' registration only confined to within the registration period***

As a principle, the registration of football clubs shall only be confined to within the first window registration period, i.e. in the 2024/2025 football season; from 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 until the eve of the first weekend or first round of matches marking commencement of the 2024/2025 first competition, for the respective league, at the latest, but not later than the last day of the first window registration period, even if the first competition in that particular league or region is scheduled to commence after the last day of the first window registration period. *No club shall therefore be allowed to register for the current season after this period; unless on exceptional cases prescribed in this circular.*

### **All football competitions business now back to the normal period of a season**

All leagues and competitions are now expected to observe the normal season period of August to May. The new 2024/2025 season is therefore expected to commence in August 2024 for the national leagues, whilst the regional leagues are expected to commence in September 2024. All leagues, irrespective of level are expected to have concluded by the end of May 2025. This is owed to the fact that in compliance with the new FIFA Competitions Management System (CMS) within the FIFA Connect Platform, the system closes automatically by the 31<sup>st</sup> May and as such all applicable competitions for the season must have been concluded. After this date, there is no access into the system to be able to manage matches.

### ***Registration of Premier League and National First Division League football clubs for the 2024/2025 football season***

Premier League and National First Division League clubs, must fully comply with the CAF and EFA club licensing regulations and timelines to qualify to participate in football competitions of the forthcoming football season, including the newly introduced Club Licensing Online Platform, domestically and internationally, as have been communicated by EFA. In this regard, EFA through the Licensing and International Affairs Department has already started to implement extensive workshops on the club licensing requirements expected of football clubs in the forthcoming 2024/2025 football season.

*No club at the Premier League and National First Division League therefore, will be allowed to register to play in the 2024/2025 football season without having complied with the club licensing regulations.*

### **Registration of all leagues' football clubs for the 2024/2025 football season**

As a principle, all football leagues, irrespective of whether they campaign or affiliate in national or regional leagues, including the national women league, are expected to register within the prescribed registration dates, as articulated in this circular, *i.e. the eve of the first weekend or first round of matches marking commencement of the 2024/2025 season first competition, for the respective league, at the latest, but not later than the last day of the first window registration period, even if the first competition in that particular member association, region or zone is scheduled to commence after the last day of the first window registration period.*

### **Exceptional circumstances for the registration of football clubs outside or later than stipulated period**

As a principle, all football clubs must have registered or affiliated before the first official match under that league or regional association, as regulated in this circular. In exceptional cases, where a football club would be having a case within the EFA, Regional Football Association or League or judicial structures of the EFA, that affects its status in terms of the league in which it has to register, such a club shall be required to pay its affiliation, membership or subscription fees to allow it to be a member of the respective football league for the current season, in observance of the timeframes given in this paragraph.

*Once a case has been resolved or concluded; the club shall therefore be expected to settle the rest of the fees, as applicable to the league in which it has to register in terms of the decision.*

### **Timelines for acceptance of exceptional circumstances matters, that may affect the registration of a football club**

Cases of football clubs that may attract such exceptional considerations on registration, are cases that must have been lodged with the EFA secretariat for an address or onward reference to the applicable football judicial structures in terms of the Statutes, within the time frames stated in this paragraph *i.e. by the Friday of the week leading to the weekend or eve (where a competition commences during weekdays) of the first date of commencement of the first competition, in question, but not later than the last day of the first window registration period, even if the first competition in that particular region is scheduled to commence later than the last day of the first window registration period.*

*For avoidance of doubt on the timeline, formal submission must be by close of business or 4:30pm, at the latest, on the last day of the first window registration period.*

This also applies to cases that would have already been in procession at the abovementioned bodies, which would have not been concluded by the closure of the football club registration period. In such circumstances, the abovementioned bodies will stipulate the latest date for the implementation of that specific football club registration.

Where such a date would have not been stipulated, the registration shall be concluded within three (3) working days of receipt of the written decision.

*A club that does not conform to the above, shall not be allowed to register and shall have lost its membership to its association or league and ultimately EFA. Such clubs may be re-admitted upon re-applying for membership with the member association or league, which shall be approved by EFA, subject to licensing and registration regulations that may be prevalent at that particular period.*

### **Regulation on the number of players to be registered**

All football clubs in the country shall be allowed to register up to a maximum of thirty (30) players, inclusive of up to a maximum of five (5) international or foreign players. All registrations are therefore to be concluded in conformity with the applicable registration regulations; the regulations for the status and transfer of players; this circular; the EFA statutes and associated regulations, decisions and directives.

### **Exceptional circumstances for the registration of players outside a window registration period**

As a principle, any registration activity for players, after the closure of a window registration period, shall thereafter recommence when the next window registration period opens; unless in exceptional circumstances, where a football club or player would have lodged a case within the EFA Players Status Committee or EFA secretariat or a case in the judicial structures of the EFA, that affects the status of the player in terms of the football club in which the player has to register.

*In such a circumstance or circumstances, and once a case has been resolved/decided/concluded, the player in question will be allowed to register with the football club, favored by the decision of the bodies mentioned in the above paragraph.*

### **Timelines for acceptance of exceptional circumstances on matters that may affect the registration of a player**

Cases of players that may attract such exceptional considerations on registration must have been lodged with the EFA secretariat for an address or onward reference to the EFA Players Status Committee or the EFA judicial structures before the closure of the registration period in question.

*For avoidance of doubt on the timelines for submission; formal submission must be by close of business or 5:00pm, at the latest, on the last day of the first window registration period.*

This also applies to cases that would have already been in procession at the abovementioned bodies, which would have not been concluded by the closure of the registration period. In such circumstances, the abovementioned bodies will stipulate the latest date for the implementation of that specific player registration.

*Where such a date would have not been stipulated, the registration shall be concluded within three (3) working days of receipt of the written decision.*

***Compulsory electronic registration of all football clubs under the auspices of EFA or organized football under the territory of EFA***

FIFA, through the Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players, specifically, the March 2020 FIFA edition, now requires that all clubs playing football under the auspices of each member association, must be registered electronically through the FIFA/EFA electronic registration system. In this regard all football clubs and players under the auspices of EFA shall for the forthcoming 2024/2025 season, be registered via the FIFA/EFA Connect platform.

***Compulsory submission of validated Declarations***

In addition to the above, it shall be mandatory for all football clubs playing football in all competitions within the territory of the EFA, irrespective of league, to lodge Legal or Validated Declarations in respect of their Participation in Local competitions and associated activities; in international competitions; and other football activities, locally and internationally as well as the Declaration on the Ownership and Control of the clubs in question.

*A club that fails to produce this declaration shall not be allowed to register.*

***Deregistered players***

In the case where a club decides to deregister a player who is surplus to requirements, such a player shall in terms of registration regulations be classified under free agents and shall be allowed to join a club of his/her choice.

The only exception to these are players who are deregistered with respect to long-term injuries; players who have been proven to have retired from football; players who for various reasons have left the country, all of whom, if they were available could be utilized by the club.

***International Players registrations and transfers***

All international players shall be registered in terms of the Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players as articulated by FIFA as well as other regulations they may be applicable in terms of the FIFA, CAF, and/or EFA Licensing programmes and laws of the country. No player shall be registered without having satisfied these regulations.

All international players playing football at the Premier League and National First Division League, shall over and above the applicable registration requirements, be employed on contract, a copy of which shall be submitted to the registration office of the EFA before such a player can be registered.

No international player shall be allowed to register with any of the above-mentioned leagues without having satisfied the requirement of a written contract. This written contract shall be authentically signed and initialed on every page by authentic officials of the club and such

contracts shall be co-signed and initialed with the player. If a recognized players' agent is involved he/she shall also be required to be signatory to the contract alongside the player in question. *As a principle, the player's signature shall always be available.*

### ***Medical examination of players***

All players in the PLE (*i.e. Premier League and National First Division League*) shall not be allowed to register without having undergone a medical examination from recognized Medical practitioners or institutions of the country. In this respect clubs shall be expected to over and above other registration requirements produce a Medical Certificate qualifying the player to be medically fit to play football in the current season. Further regulations may be expected in view of international changes on the subject.

*Other member leagues should also encourage their clubs to have their players medically examined too.*

### ***Registration fee for players and clubs under the FIFA Connect Platform***

The registration fee per player playing in a National First Division League and Premier League shall be E100.00 (*One Hundred Emalangenzi Only per player*); whilst those campaigning in the Regional Leagues' clubs; Women Football League, U17 and U15 Premier League teams, shall be E50.00 (*Fifty Emalangenzi Only per player*). Registration fees are payable electronically, within the FIFA/EFA Connect Platform and/or as directed by EFA on the subject, after which a club will be accorded a receipt that will allow the player(s) in question to be registered and/or the collection of playing licenses.

*No other arrangement shall be acceptable. It is therefore, important for clubs and membership to observe this directive.*


### ***Important to note***

1. For international players; only registrations whose applications shall be lodged with the EFA office, before or on the last day of a window period, shall be allowed to register outside that window registration period, owing to the processes involved in acquiring other essential and relevant documentation, a situation which is also provided for in the FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players.
2. No extension to the registration periods shall be allowed, hence it is expected that all registrations and/or applications should have been concluded by the last day of the registration window period, unless they qualify to be registered under exceptional cases as articulated in this circular and regulations that may be provided to this effect.
3. Registration offices are therefore expected to strictly abide by these regulations and timelines. Clubs are therefore expected to plan in advance for these registration periods to avoid instances of failed registration caused by failure to conform to the regulations and timelines.

4. The EFA Licensing and International Affairs Department will provide the operational requirements and training in scheduled dates; which must be strictly observed by all football clubs, and their respective registration officers for the realization of a smooth and adequate registration process.

Your usual good cooperation is solicited.

Yours in Football,  
**Eswatini Football Association,**

  
**Frederick Mngomezulu**  
Chief Executive Officer



Copy to:

- *Licensing, and International Affairs*
- *Players' Status Committee*
- *Disciplinary committee*
- *Appeals Committee*