

TO THE MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS OF FIFA

Circular no. 1712

Zurich, 13 March 2020
SG/egs/kja

Release of players to association teams and COVID-19

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are writing to you regarding the release of players to association teams in the upcoming international windows in the context of Annexe 1 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players (**RSTP**).

The global outbreak of the COVID-19 virus is a fluid and developing matter. Statistics from the World Health Organization, at the time of writing, indicate that there are approximately 130,000 reported cases affecting 123 countries, cities, or territories. Many national governments have put in place restricted travel and immigration requirements, introduced quarantine periods, and banned public gatherings. Football (and public) authorities have taken similar precautions in ordering matches to be postponed or played behind closed doors, restricting access to team dressing rooms and stadiums, and suspending or cancelling competitions. FIFA itself recently postponed the Asian and South American qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™.

The well-being and health of all individuals involved in football matches is obviously paramount, and a balanced and responsible position is required from FIFA as world football's governing body.

As the circumstances constitute a situation of force majeure, the Bureau of the Council today decided on the following course of action in accordance with article 27 of the FIFA RSTP:

1. Clubs are not obliged to release their registered players to association teams.
2. If a club agrees to release a registered player to an association team, the player may decline the call-up.
3. Any such decisions shall not be subject to disciplinary measures.
4. If a player is unable to resume duty with their club by the relevant deadline due to COVID-19, the association and/or the player shall not be subject to any future restrictions or disciplinary measures.
5. The following international windows are subject to this decision:
 - a. 23-31 March 2020 (men's international match calendar);

- b. 6-15 April 2020 (women's international match calendar);
 - c. 6-15 April 2020 (futsal international match calendar).
6. FIFA recommends that any international matches previously scheduled to be played during the aforementioned windows be postponed; the final decision on this matter rests with the relevant competition organisers or with the relevant member associations in case of friendlies.
7. Matches affected by this decision which are postponed should be rescheduled following appropriate consultation between FIFA and the confederation(s) concerned.

Should you have any concerns regarding the above matters, please contact the Players' Status Department at psdfifa@fifa.org.

Yours faithfully,

FIFA



Fatma Samoura
Secretary General

cc: FIFA Council
Confederations