

TO THE MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS OF FIFA

Circular no. 1769

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SG/egs/kja

FIFA Legal Handbook 2021 and football regulatory changes (Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players and the Procedural Rules Governing the Football Tribunal)

Dear Sir or Madam,

The first edition of the FIFA Legal Handbook, published in October 2020, provided a comprehensive electronic collection of main FIFA rules, regulations and other statutory documents. The electronic version of this document was very well-received by the member associations and football stakeholders.

Based on this positive experience, we have decided to publish the FIFA Legal Handbook 2021, which is now available in electronic format containing the latest versions of the main FIFA rules, regulations and other statutory documents.

Football regulatory changes

As you are aware, the 71st FIFA Congress on 21 May 2021 approved various amendments to the FIFA Statutes and the Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes. One of the sets of amendments involved the creation of the Football Tribunal.

In short, the Football Tribunal consolidates the existing FIFA decision-making bodies into a single umbrella body and streamlines their governance requirements. It will be comprised of three chambers, competent to pass decisions on specific football-related disputes and regulatory applications.

As a result, several amendments to the Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players (**RSTP**), as well as the new Procedural Rules Governing the Football Tribunal (**Procedural Rules**), were required.

On 31 August 2021, the Bureau of the FIFA Council approved the amended RSTP and new Procedural Rules. It also appointed the chairpersons, deputy chairpersons, and members of the Dispute Resolution Chamber and Players' Status Chamber of the Football Tribunal. Appointments to the Agents Chamber will be made following the approval of the Football Agent Regulations.

The amendments to the RSTP came into force on **31 August 2021**. The new Procedural Rules will enter into force on **1 October 2021**.

In line with this decision, the Football Tribunal will commence operations on **1 October 2021**.

The existing Dispute Resolution Chamber and Players' Status Committee will continue to make decisions under the existing procedural rules **up to and including 30 September 2021**.

Please find below the key amendments to the FIFA regulatory framework for your information.

Amendments to the Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players

The amendments to the RSTP are predominantly technical changes to introduce the Football Tribunal and to consolidate all procedural matters into the Procedural Rules. A number of existing articles have been moved to the Procedural Rules in full or in part, as well as some existing articles or annexes being renumbered.

Procedural Rules Governing the Football Tribunal

The new Procedural Rules serve to establish the organisation, powers, functions, and conduct of proceedings before the Football Tribunal. They contain general provisions applicable to all procedures, and rules specific to certain procedures (including communication methods). Below are some of the new rules.

- Procedures are **free of charge** if one of the parties is a **natural person** (player, coach, football agent, or match agent).
- The deadline to pay procedural costs (if applicable) is now **ten days**. Payment remains a mandatory requirement for grounds of a decision to be notified. In such cases, notification will only be made to the party that requested the grounds and paid the procedural costs.
- Procedural costs (if applicable) are now payable in **United States dollars**.
- Where evidence and submissions are in a **single FIFA language**, this language alone shall be used for the procedure. Where they are in **more than one FIFA language**, the procedure will be **conducted, and the decision issued, solely in English**.
- An **expedited decision process for preliminary procedural** matters has been introduced. Where the FIFA general secretariat deems that a chamber obviously lacks jurisdiction or a claim is obviously time-barred, it may refer the matter for a decision before continuing the procedure;
- **Specific procedural rules governing all regulatory applications** have been consolidated and introduced. This includes applications related to: the international transfer or first registration of a minor; a limited minor exemption; authorisation of the registration of a player; request for eligibility or change of association; or, the late return of a player from representative-team duty.


- **Mediation** is now possible. Parties may be invited to undertake a voluntary and free mediation process. If mediation is successful, the mediator and relevant chairperson will ratify a settlement agreement. This will be considered a final and binding decision.

The FIFA Legal Handbook 2021 (including the new edition of the RSTP and the Procedural Rules), and the list of persons appointed to the Football Tribunal are now available on legal.fifa.com.

We thank you for your kind attention to the above and for informing your affiliated clubs accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Fatma Samoura
Secretary General

cc: - FIFA Council
- Confederations
- European Club Association (ECA)
- FIFPRO
- World Leagues Forum