

Recreation & Wellbeing at UC Berkeley

RecWell Sport Clubs

Frequently Asked Questions

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For further details, please consult the Sport Club Handbook, Website, or contact the team with an OCS Inquiry Form.

1. Club Changes & Administrative Updates

Q: Who made the decision to change how Sport Clubs operate?

A: Under the guidance of Student Affairs and Campus Leadership, RecWell initiated a strategic transition to guide our Sport Clubs toward operational independence. What began in the summer of 2025 as a comprehensive evaluation to envision this new chapter has culminated in the finalization of these structural updates this summer.

Q: What is different this year compared to the new changes from last year?

A: The primary development this year is the expansion of our financial options, which are now much more robust, flexible, and tailored to give your team greater operational freedom. Aside from these enhanced financial structures, all other policy elements such as branding, space allocation, and safety requirements remain the same as last year, but are now fully finalized and integrated into our daily operations.

Q: When does this change take effect?

A: The changes are implemented immediately, starting fall 2026.

Q: Where do we go for more information and support?

A: The updated and comprehensive Sport Club Handbook should be your first stop for information, alongside the newly updated RecWell Sport Club Website. Additionally, anyone can submit an inquiry to the Office of Competitive Sports for more support at any time, or book an appointment for an in-person meeting.

Q: Why is there yet another change to Sport Clubs?

A: We completely understand that adapting to consecutive years of policy adjustments is frustrating, and change fatigue is very real. Our genuine intention last year was for that transition to be the only shift; however, fully navigating complex university bureaucracy required more time than anticipated, and we needed to experience this past year with you to gather vital team feedback and ensure our final model provided the flexibility you actually need.

Q: Do we expect there to be more changes in the future?

A: No. The core framework is now finalized to give your team long-term stability.

Q: With this change, we need more support. Who can help us?

A: To assist teams through this transition, the Office of Competitive Sports has hired an additional coordinator dedicated to offering enhanced support for Sport Club Teams, particularly surrounding financial accounting. In addition, club representatives are welcome to submit an inquiry to the Office of Competitive Sports at any time or schedule an in-person appointment.

Q: Is RecWell cutting Sport Clubs?

A: No. RecWell and UC Berkeley are absolutely not cutting Sport Clubs.

2. Financial Guidelines & Account Management

Q: It has been hard to get information on our financial accounts. How can we stay up to date on account funding?

A: Recognizing this challenge, the Office of Competitive Sports has hired an additional coordinator to provide robust support for Sport Club Teams, specifically focusing on financial accounting. Any authorized Sport Club Officer can submit an official inquiry to receive real-time updates regarding their account funding.

Q: Why can only students be reimbursed? My coach or my parent paid for something; can they be reimbursed?

A: At UC Berkeley (and across the UC system), reimbursement is generally restricted to students, faculty, and staff because of a few overlapping reasons baked into university and IRS policy. Reimbursement is defined as a payment to a university employee, student, or other individual for expenses incurred in connection with a university-approved business meeting, entertainment event, or other authorized activity under UC policy — which requires an accountable relationship with the university that only students, faculty, and staff hold.

Q: All of these financial options are overwhelming to decide which is the best fit for our club. How can we get support in making a decision?

A: The Office of Competitive Sports (OCS) team is fully available to advise and provide hands-on support. We will help your club evaluate the available options and select the structure that best aligns with your operational needs.

Q: Will Registered Student Organization (RSO) Sponsorship (with CalLink from the ASUC) be an option in the future?

A: This decision rests entirely with the ASUC leadership rather than Student Affairs staff. In 2025, the ASUC student leaders elected not to include Sport Clubs under this specific sponsorship model.

Q: How do I indicate my choice for the financial option? Is there a deadline?

A: Please inform OCS staff by using the OCS Inquiry form no later than September 13 or your first financial transaction.

Q: How can I ensure my reimbursement is processed quickly?

A: The primary cause of processing delays is missing or incomplete documentation. If files are missing, our team will email you to request them; please monitor your inbox closely to resolve these gaps swiftly. Furthermore, Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT/ETF) processing is significantly faster than physical check distribution. You can establish or update your transfer preferences directly via CalCentral.

Q: Which financial options can I pick to pay a coach?

A: Option 2 (Off Campus) and Option 4 (501(c)(3)) are the primary recommended choices. These are key because they allow your club to pay coaches directly out of an off-campus account or through an established 501(c)(3) entity. Under the "plus" models (Options 3 and 5), coaches cannot be paid using donation funds. Options 2, 3, 4, and 5 can all technically work, Option 2 and Option 4 are the primary recommended choices if you would like to pay a coach.

Q: Can I get access to my team's financial records?

A: Yes, records are gladly provided upon request. The administrative team is currently working toward closing the fiscal year this upcoming August. We make every effort to deliver an accurate, updated financial report within two business days of receiving an officer's request.

Q: Can I choose a combination of the financial options, or choose an option not listed?

A: The five financial models we provided are pre-vetted to ensure they are fully compliant with university policy. You are welcome to pursue an alternative if your team prefers it, but please be aware that doing so comes with more risk, as they fall outside our framework and we cannot provide advising or administrative guidance on alternative structures.

3. Getting Started, Facilities, Space Allocation & Events

Q: When will we find out our practice schedule for the fall semester?

A: Practice and training schedules are generally released after a team's members are medically cleared to participate. Schedules are generally released in mid-September if progression clearance is made and we have schedules approved by Intercollegiate Athletics (where applicable).

Q: Why does it feel like we have less and less practice time allocated each year?

A: RecWell is committed to honoring each team's historical field, court, or pool allocation. However, university facilities are in high demand, and RecWell is not the manager or owner of many of the spaces clubs request. All fields, along with some gyms and pools, are IA spaces, so permission to use them must be requested by RecWell and approved by IA.

Q: How do we secure additional facility access for practices and special events?

A: For on-campus space, please submit an Event Request form with a minimum of 4 weeks for appropriate approvals. We also have a list of alternative venue spaces near but off-campus that you could book.

Q: Why are there last-minute field cancellations and scheduling changes? Will this continue?

A: The athletic fields are unfortunately not under the direct operational control of RecWell. Because scheduling and field maintenance are managed by external campus entities (such as Intercollegiate Athletics), last-minute adjustments or cancellations can occur beyond RecWell's control. We work diligently to minimize disruptions and will communicate any adjustments as immediately as possible.

4. Communication & Support Channels

Q: Where can I find the changes in writing?

A: All critical resources, policy updates, and operational tools are detailed in the newly revised Sport Club Handbook and the updated Sport Club Website, both designed to fully support our teams.

Q: Why does it take so long for the staff to get back to me?

A: The Office of Competitive Sports (OCS) receives a high volume of inquiries daily. Our current average turnaround time for responding to inquiries is two (2) business days. We appreciate your patience as we ensure every inquiry receives a thorough and accurate response.

Q: How can I talk to a staff person outside of the inquiry form? Can I come into the office?

A: We welcome drop-ins at the office during our open hours, however, to ensure we can help you in a timely manner, booking an appointment in advance is highly recommended to ensure the appropriate staff member is available to assist you. A meeting booking tool will be released in Fall 2026 to help you schedule meetings with OCS staff.

Q: What are the different ways I can interact with the staff?

A: There are multiple ways to collaborate and stay connected with us: the Sport Club Officer Council or booking a dedicated, formal meeting time with our team either in person or virtually via Zoom.

5. Naming & Branding Compliance

Q: Why do we have to use updated naming and branding?

A: Adherence to the updated naming and branding guidelines is mandatory due to the following structural and legal requirements:

- The assets involve legally protected campus trademarks and branding elements.
- Specific naming conventions and logos are strictly reserved for Intercollegiate Athletics (IA).
- Strict compliance with these guidelines is required for your team to remain a RecWell recognized sport club.
- Please note that RecWell is not the policy holder. This means we cannot entertain adjustments, exceptions or changes to this policy.

In Summer 2025 all RecWell sport clubs became Registered Student Organizations (RSOs). All RSOs at Berkeley must follow these specific guidelines

Q: Why has this branding guidance changed?

A: Because student organizations are separate and distinct entities from the university, they are not allowed to use university trademarks in the name of the student organization and in the nicknames of the student organization.

Q: What is the guidance?

A: The following is the guidance that all RSOs follow:

- [Trademarks](#) include (so these are not allowed in names/nicknames): UC Berkeley, California, Cal, UC, UCB, Berkeley Chapter, Berkeley Campus, Oski, Golden Bears, Go Bears, Bears, Campus Building Names, etc.
- Not allowed: Using Berkeley or California at the beginning of the name
- Allowed: “Student Org at/of Berkeley” or “Student Org at/of California”

The university has granted the use of the name “Berkeley” or “California” to student organizations to be used only at the end of the student organization’s name or nickname(s) (“Student Org at/of Berkeley” or “Student Org at/of California”). If the student organization has received proper authorization from the Office of Business Contracts and Brand Protection (BCBP) and OASIS, a student organization can use university trademarked terms in the name.

Q: What can I name my sport club?

A: Acceptable names include:

- [Sport Club Name] Club at Berkeley
- [Sport Club Name] Club of Berkeley
- [Sport Club Name] Club at California
- [Sport Club Name] Club of California

- Script must be distinct from the official Athletics wordmark (e.g. Collegiate Block style).

Q: When do we have to use the updated naming and branding?

A: The changes are implemented immediately, starting fall 2026.

6. Medical Clearance & Athlete Onboarding

Q: Will medical clearance be required for tryouts?

A: For returning members, medical clearance is required before any type of participation on sport club activities. Potential new members to the program or your team are NOT required to be medically cleared before trying out. Tryout participants must sign a waiver before tryouts.

Q: When can we start the medical clearance process?

A: August 10, 2026

Q: Do we still have access to the athletic trainers?

A: If a club is designated as a high-impact sport or requests an athletic trainer, one will be provided, if available. For the safety and long-term well-being of your club, if your sport is designated as high impact and an athletic trainer is not available, we advise that you hire an athletic trainer or do not hold contact drills/scrimmages on these dates. These training sessions should only include skill/technical work, cardio and conditioning, and walk-through activities, and should exclude any drills where collision/contact is either intended or likely. Please connect with our Athletic Trainers (calscathletictraining@berkeley.edu) if you have further questions about which drills/activities would fall into either category.

Q: How long does the clearance process ("athlete onboarding") typically take?

A: Depending on the completeness of the documents you upload and how quickly you complete all the steps, the process can complete in a few days to two weeks.