



FIRST Mid-Atlantic *FIRST*® LEGO® League Participation Policies and Event Registration Process (2024-25)



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1 Introduction

1.1 FIRST Participation Rules for your specific Program not covered here!!!

You can get to FIRST's specific "participation" rules for your FLL Challenge and FLL Explore by accessing the [FIRST Seasons Page](#) on the FIRST Website. This document will not cover these rules.

1.2 We are FIRST Mid-Atlantic FLL or FMA-FLL.

You can go our [FMA-FLL Website](#) to see a [Map of Our Region](#) and others around us. You can also see the [FMA Region's Distribution of Teams](#). This document describes the FMA-FLL participation policies and the registration process to take part in an official FMA-FLL Event. This covers all teams attending the PA-East and NJ-North FLL Challenge Regional Qualifying Tournaments or RQTs and FLL Explore Festivals.

1.3 Conflicting Statements (items outlined in this document stand)

In the event of a conflicting statement between this Policy and other webpages or forms on this site, these Event Participation Policy applies. Certain unofficial events may have additional participation criteria as defined on that event webpage which augment this policy. For example, a "rookie tournament" may limit participation to teams newly established this season.

1.4 Concerning Your FIRST Team Data we receive from FIRST

We get information from FIRST that shows us your team's standing in FIRST's eyes. We make many decisions about what to do with your registration and participation based upon that data. If we are rejecting your participation because FIRST is saying you are not fully qualified, you must fix that with FIRST. You can call FIRST at any time. Ask for FLL team support and they can verify and if necessary, correct your status.

1.5 FIRST Team Data Problems – FIRST FLL Team Support: (603) 666-3906

1.6 Your FMA Registration Email MUST MATCH your FIRST Dashboard email

The data we get from FIRST includes the coaches and administrator's emails for your team. These are the emails you used to register your team info in FIRST. *These are the only emails we have to verify registration to one of our Official Events.* We cannot change these emails, only you can in your FIRST dashboard or by calling FIRST team support.

1.7 All email communication will go only to the emails in your FIRST Team account

Please check these regularly so you do not miss important team updates.

1.8 FMA Team Status Updates will start in late September

Starting in late September we will be sending weekly Team "Score Card" updates to nudge you to complete all your requirements BEFORE you register for our events and compete. These are all based upon the FIRST Team Data. This is just to help be sure you are ready to compete this season. It will show you what FIRST is telling us about your team.

2 FIRST & FMA-FLL Event Participation Policies

2.1 FIRST Mid-Atlantic FLL Events

These policies apply to all FMA-FLL NJ-North / PA-East Region FLL Challenge and FLL Explore Teams. This includes, primarily, Training, Workshops, Explore Festivals, Regional Qualifying Tournaments or RQTs and the FLL Challenge Championships events. Some events listed on our website's Events Page are Official FMA-FLL managed Events while others are [Unofficial Community Events](#) as defined by FIRST.

2.2 Additional Unofficial Community Events (scrimmages, training, etc..)

Anyone can run an Unofficial Community Event. These are scrimmages, training, discussions and anything a team wants to run to help other teams. These are hosted and managed by FRC/FTC/FLL Teams in our region. Teams and their school/organization hosting Unofficial Community Events may have their own policies. Please contact their Event Coordinators for full details.

2.3 FIRST Youth Protection Program (both coaches must be up to date)

The FIRST Youth Protection Program is an important part of the protection of our youth. Each coach must complete this process to be with a team at an event. The 2 coaches must follow the requirements outlined in FIRST Youth Protection Program.

2.4 FIRST Consent and Release Forms (required by both coaches, and team members)

Each of the two coaches and, all youth team members must complete a FIRST Consent and Release Form. *These now contain the information that eliminates the need for a separate FMA C&R Form. The FMA C&R Form is no longer needed.*

Completion of the FIRST C&R Forms are checked at each of FMA-FLL RQTs, Explore Festivals and Regional Championships. **The easiest way to do this is** to have everyone fill out on-line version on your team's FIRST dashboard. Your FIRST team roster will indicate who has forms in the FIRST system and who has not. FIRST has developed simple processes to do this. These are available under [Teams Required Documentation](#).

Any missing member forms, not completed on the team's FIRST dashboard, must be filled out on paper. These non-online paper forms are gathered together by the coach and submitted at each competition they attend. **IMPORTANT: Any team member, coach, registered chaperone, team member, who does not have either an electronic or a hard copy FIRST C&R Form will not be allowed to participate with the team at the event.**

[Team Required Documentation](#) section can be found under your Explore / Challenge Team Info Pages on the website. **Please DO NOT email any FIRST Consent & Release forms to the FLL Director. We cannot process them.**

2.5 FMA Requires PA only Coaches and Volunteers complete PA-Act153 compliance

Please refer to the [FMA-FLL PA-Act 153 Compliance](#) document to complete and certify that your robot team(s) adults have completed their PA-Act153 Clearances. This level of clearance is similar to what a substitute teacher would have to obtain.

3 Before You Team Can Register for FMA-FLL Events

FMA understands that you are working to be fully compliant with all the FIRST rules. Please get this all resolved before registration opens in Mid-October. The FIRST data has a field call Ready to Register for Events. That must have a value of “Event Ready”. If it does not you will not be able to register for our Official Events. Below is an example of reasons you are not Event Ready...

Example: Lead/Coach Mentor 1 and/or Lead/Coach Mentor 2 not yet passed YPP screening (FLL Challenge Team xxxxx), Lead Coach/Mentor 2 has incomplete Youth Protection Status

Any problems with this must be directed by you to FIRST Team Support: (603) 666-3906

4 Official Regional Event Eligibility

This section applies to Official FLL Challenge Regional Qualifying Tournaments, FLL Explore Festivals and the FMA-FLL Challenge Championship. In this section these events are collectively referred to as Festivals, RQTs and Champs. Some FLL RQTs are also running FLL Festivals at the same event.

4.1 FMA-FLL PA-East and NJ-North teams may participate in their own region only

Only FMA-FLL teams in the NJ-North and PA-East Regions, may participate in FMA-FLL RQTs, Festivals and FMA-FLL Championships. Teams in one region may not participate in Official FMA RQTs or Festivals of the other region.

4.2 FLL Challenge Qualifying Tournament Participation Limits (one per team)

An FMA-FLL Challenge team may participate in only one RQT. Teams can only play within their region.

4.3 FLL Explore Festivals Participation will allow 2 plays as long as there is room

An FMA-FLL Explore team may participate in two Official Explore Festivals. You will register for your FIRST when registration opens. Then you will register again for your second one starting after Nov. 4, 2024 at 7:30 PM. Once all slots are full a second play may not be possible.

4.4 Challenge Qualifying Tournament Participation Limits (one per team)

An FMA-FLL Challenge team may participate in only one RQT. An FMA-FLL Explore team may participate in only one Explore Festival. However, there may be additional events later in the season. Out-of-state teams may participate in Unofficial Community run Scrimmages, Festivals, Workshops and other training events.

4.5 Event No Shows (entrance fee will not be returned)

Un-announced no-shows are not in the spirit of Gracious Professionalism. Teams that cannot participate due to circumstances beyond the control of the team (e.g. school closings, severe weather, etc.) will not be considered no-shows if the FMA-FLL Director is not notified 3 days prior to the start of the Tournament. Consequences of no-shows without contact us include, but are not limited to the following:

- Possible ineligibility to attend the FMA-FLL Championship Tournament
- Reduced registration priority for future RTQs or Festivals
- Forfeiture of FMA-FLL registration fees

4.6 There will be two championship events. One in NJ-North and another in PA-East.

Teams must advance from their regions Official FMA-FLL RQT events. These are called “Moving On” teams. The list will be posted on the FMA-FLL website under the championship event for their region a few days after their regional qualifier. They will have a status of “Invited”.

4.6.1 Invited “Champs” teams receive email and invoice for the Champs Events.

The invoice will be automatically generated by FMA-FLL. Once the invoice is paid to the Local Event Organization running the event.

4.6.2 “Invited” teams may decide NOT to attend the Championship event

For whatever reason, if a team decides it cannot attend a Championship event, the coach should contact the FMA-FLL Director immediately to inform them they are not attending. The next team from that regional, by score, will be contacted by the FMA-FLL Director and invited.

4.7 FMA-FLL Challenge Champion Teams will move-on to a PA State Championship

Starting in 2023, FIRST decided to award post season move on events to the State. As a result, we in PA-East have to have a PA State FLL Championships. Top teams from the PA-East Championships will be invited to the PA State Championships. The winners will be offered the after season move-ons.

5 Registering Your Team(s) for Official Events

Team administrators or team coaches will use a Google Form to register. Remember some RQTs will have Festivals on the same day.

5.1 You Must Enter your Challenge Teams on one form and Explore on another

You must enter your Challenge teams in one submission and then your Explore teams in another submission.

5.2 Register as soon as the widow opens!!!!!!

We are using a Google Form because once registration opens, we get slammed with requests. Our own website could not handle it. Last season, we had 575 teams register with us using this form, over 5 weeks. Below is a chart of the responses over the first week.

Time Range	Total Requests	Total Teams	Percent of Total Teams
First 5 minutes after Open	98	152	27%
End Of First Day	200	282	50%
End of First Week	284	406	70%

You can see why it is important that you register as soon as the system opens. Make sure you get all your coaches registered and YPP cleared or your request will be ignored.

If you absolutely need a certain event, on a certain date, register as soon as the system opens to be sure you get what you want!!!!

5.3 A “Test” Event Registration opens on Mon., Sept. 30, 2024 at 7:30 PM

To help the new teams, there will be a test of the registration system. Please look out for emails about that. This is to ensure you understand the process. If you enter you team then, you may get feedback that you are ok or you may get feedback that there are errors in your entry. We want to give you every opportunity to be able to register the first time when official registration opens in October. Remember this is only a test!!!!

5.4 Official Event Registration opens in October on a Mon, Oct. 14, 2024 at 7:30 PM

This time was chosen to allow all coaches and admins to be most likely off work, home and ready when the registration link goes active.

We will decide on final event sizes based upon the counts we have at that moment. Any team registering after this may have fewer choices of events to participate in.

5.5 Official Event Fees (Explore Festival \$50, Challenge RQT \$100, Champs \$150)

This applies to “Official” events only. This registration fee is used to pay for running these events, to purchase trophies, medals and other awards, and help event runners offset their costs. The costs obviously go up by event type as some of the same items cost more.

5.6 Official Event Cross Region Registration Prohibited (teams play in their own regions)

Said another way, teams from NJ-North will not be able to register in official FIRST / FMA-FLL RQTs or Festivals in PA-East and teams in PA-East are not able to register in official FIRST / FMA-FLL competitions in NJ-North. However, you may be able to register in scrimmages and trainings across regions with first preference going to teams from that region. This part has to be further developed.

The Regional limitations are because the local event organizations in each of these areas have over time developed a “season” specific to their regions. Allowing cross registration will cause a lot of confusion and problems with teams familiar with their “home” regions event schedules.

Some may see this as unfair but in reality, teams in the region will be competing with others in the same region. This means no team has an advantage one way or the other with others in the same region. In addition, if you are moved-on to the regional championship, your team has more time to respond to judges’ comments and update the robot game for the championships.

If a team registers in the Google Form outside their region, they will be sent an email telling what happened. They will then have to re-register in the correct region. This is going to take time and they may not get into an event in their region that they want.

5.7 Advanced Registration Is Required!!!

Advanced registration is required for all RQTs and Festivals. FMA-FLL will may accept registration requests after the registration period is closed to help fill in events. It should be understood that if you wait too long you will most likely not get into the event you want as they fill up fast. We are sorry but we cannot make room for your team in this circumstance. To do that we would have to move others and you can see that is not fair no matter what he circumstances. The point is, register as soon as you can.

Our RQTs have a limited capacity. Only teams on the Registered (PAID) List may participate in the event.

5.8 Access the [Registration Section](#) on Team Info. Then click the registration link All regions and programs will use the same form. Remember some RQTs host Festivals on the same day.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Once you register here, the request will be processed later. Once processed you will get an invoice. That invoice will indicate what event you are initially slotted into. Invoices will be paid directly to the Local Event Organizations and NOT FMA. This is a change from the past seasons.

5.9 Administrator or Coach Section: Only Admin or coaches can register teams.

Important Point: For this reason, the individual doing this **MUST** enter a name, email and phone number that matches the FIRST dashboard info of an Administrator, Coach or Assistant Coach of each team registered. **Please check your information in the FIRST Dashboard. Errors will cause delays in processing.**

To accommodate large multi-team programs, you can enter several team numbers in the same form however they must all be from the same region and program. This entry will represent that group of teams that want to attend the same event as their FIRST Choice. If the FIRST Choice cannot take all the teams FMA will contact the coaches to work it out. **Register early!!!!**

5.10 Selecting your Region (NJ-North, PA-East) and Program (Explore, Challenge)

Here you will be asked to select you region and program. The options are...

NJ-North FMA-FLL Explore,
NJ-North FMA-FLL Challenge,

PA-East FMA-FLL Explore,
PA-East FMA-FLL Challenge

5.11 Enter your Team Number(s): (A team number or comma space separated list)

First you will be asked to enter the team number(s) you represent. If you represent multiple teams, you can enter them as comma AND space separated numbers.

Good Example 1: 12345

Good Example 2: 65432, 7836, 9065, 36789

Bad Example 1: 421,456,612,564,567,145,123 (We see this as a very big number like the number of the atoms in the universe. Very, very bad form!!!!)

Bad Example 2: Larkin Bots (Incredibly bad form!!!! We need the Team numbers not the team's name.)

Any other characters besides spaces numbers and commas will cause the field validation to fail. You must fix the entry so the form accepts it, thus the examples.

Important Note: If you represent multiple teams where one group or teams wants Event X as First Choice and the other group wants Event Y as First choice then **you need to enter 2 different forms.**

5.12 Select Your Top 4 Event Choices

You will be allowed to select 4 Events in your selected Region and Program. This will indicate the order of your priority for the teams attending. **Make sure you select at least one early in the season event if your later events get filled.** Selecting fewer events or the same event several times, may feel good but will make you ineligible for any if all the others are full. **The point, select 4 different events...**

6 FLL Registered Team Placement Process

6.1 Initial 2-week delay in publishing teams at events (big initial rush)

There will be a delay in reporting teams assigned to events for the first 2 weeks of registration opening. This will allow us to process all the requests as this is the busiest time of registration. We expect some teams will make mistakes in the entry process. FMA will spend this time fixing the entries so we can process all of them. We may send messages to the emails on record in your teams FIRST account contact coaches for clarifications.

6.2 Teams process by registration timestamp order

Eligible teams are processed in the order they appear in the Google Form spread sheet. It has a time stamp of when the entry came in. Entries are processed in that order. If a team registers but has not completed all the steps to be allowed to register, they will be skipped and get an email telling they are skipped. When they had completed everything to make them eligible to register, their timestamp will be updated to noon of that date and then they can be processed.

6.3 Your Event Choices are now checked

If you register for an event, as your Choice 1, but it is filled, your Choice 2 will be checked and so on. If all your events are filled an email will be sent to the emails on record in your teams FIRST account from the FMA-FLL Director asking what you want to. Call or respond with email.

6.4 Invited Teams Displayed on Teams Event calendar under event information.

After the first 2 weeks, as registration moves along, each event will now have a list of "Invited" teams (those who have registered). All assigned team statuses can be found on the Event Calendar Pages, under the event descriptions, on the FMA-FLL website.

6.5 A Team is notified by email what event they are "invited" to. (Includes invoice)

On the website, the Team's status will be set to "Invited" indicating they will fill that spot but will only be considered as registered once they have paid FMA-FLL registration fee to the Local Event Organization (LEO) in a timely manner.

6.6 Call 215-823-9593 immediately for errors or you do not want to accept the invoice.

The invoice or invitation can be modified or withdrawn.

6.7 Your team shows as Invited when you are placed in an event.

Once registered for an event FMA will send an invoice to you. You will pay your LEO according to instructions on the invoice. The website will remain as Invited. Payment for the event is between you and your LEO.

6.8 Your last chance to pay for the event is at the door to the event with a check.

You MUST let the LEO know way ahead of time you will be paying at the event!!

7 FMA-FLL Championships Tournaments

7.1 General Champs Info

For the 2024-25 season the Championships registration fee will be \$150 We will have 2 Champs events, one in each of our regions, NJ-North and PA-East.

7.2 You can only qualify for a Champs event from your participation in a region RQT.

Once the RQT is complete the “move-on” teams are put in a list of teams competing in the Champs event. You will get an invoice indicating you are registered. You respond by paying the invoice or letting us know you will not be competing.

8 RQT/Festival Rescheduling and Cancellation

The decision to reschedule or cancel any RQT is not undertaken lightly. The situations most likely to cause this include, but are not limited to:

- Severe weather conditions.
- Exceptional circumstances including extended power outage, loss of heating/air conditioning, loss of water, fire, natural disaster, etc.
- Significant illness that might involve the closing of a facility prior to an event.

8.1 FMA-FLL Director will contact teams with delay/cancellation information

The FMA-FLL Director and the LEC will determine if there will be a delay, early dismissal, rescheduling, or cancellation of the event. If the event has to be rescheduled or canceled before the event day, teams will be notified by an email sent to the team’s main and alternate contacts as designated in the team’s registration with FIRST only.

8.2 The Event’s Calendar will include delay/cancellation information

The information will also be displayed on the FMA-FLL/FLL Website under the events information page.