

## **502.6 GAME OFFICIALS**

Misconduct toward a referee may include, but is not limited to, all registered referees, assistant referees, fourth officials or other duly appointed to assist. It also includes any unlicensed or unregistered person serving in an emergency capacity as a referee under USSF Policy 531, Section 2 and any club assistant referees.

Any act committed before, during, or after a match, even at later times, if it is match related, such as at work or at home may constitute misconduct toward game officials.

### **502.6.1 REFEREE ABUSE**

Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment.

Abuse includes, but is not limited to, the following acts committed upon a referee; using foul or abusive language toward a referee (must imply a threat of physical harm), spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property; spitting at (but not on) the referee; verbally threatening a referee with remarks that carry imply or direct threats of physical harm.

Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as "I'll get you after the game." or "You won't get out of here in one piece." shall be deemed referee abuse.

Discipline: Minimum sanctions

- a. Six (6) games or three (3) month suspension, whichever is longer.
- b. Spitting at a referee or game official, six (6) games or six (6) month suspension, whichever is longer.
- c. An adult upon a youth referee, minimum of one (1) year suspension.

### **502.6.2 REFEREE ASSAULT**

Referee assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee committed before during, or after a match, even later times if it is match related such as at work or at home. "For the purpose of this rule, "intentional act" shall mean an act intended to bring about a result which will invade the interests of another in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the actions are irrelevant." Assault includes, but is not limited to, the following act committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee's uniform or personal property (i.e., car, equipment, etc.).

The player, coach, manager, spectator or official committing the referee assault is automatically suspended as follows:

- a. For a minor or slight touching of the referee or the referee's uniform or personal property, at least six (6) months from the time of the assault;
- b. Except as provided in above, for any other assault, at least twelve (12) months from the time of the assault;
- c. For an assault committed by an adult and the referee is seventeen (17) years of age or younger, at least three (3) years; or
- d. For an assault when serious injuries are inflicted, at least five (5) years.

## **502.7 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING REFEREE ABUSE AND ASSAULT**

### **Section 1: *Procedures to be followed for any alleged incident of referee assault or abuse for any FYSA sanction club/league/Cup event.***

The referee, or a member of the referee crew (should the referee be incapacitated), will report any incident of alleged referee assault/abuse to the FYSA State Office within seventy-two (72) hours of the incident. The written report submitted must be postmarked within seventy-two (72) hours of the incident (excluding legal holidays) and must include the official game report, supplemental referee report, any other information the referee wants to submit, and the FYSA/US Youth Soccer pass of the player/coach/manager or the name of the non-player under investigation (if known). The FYSA Representative must, in turn, forward the report to the FYSA office. FYSA will in turn notify the SYRA, within 48 hours of receipt of the report.

Upon receipt at the FYSA office, a file will be opened to contain a copy of the initial report and the player/coach's pass, if applicable. The original report will then be immediately forwarded to FYSA's Review and Discipline Committee. The Review and Discipline Committee will make a determination within seven (7) days of receipt of the report as to one of the following: (i) possible referee assault did occur; (ii) possible referee abuse did occur; or (iii) documentation provided did not warrant a determination of either assault or abuse. (FYSA will inform the SYRA as to the determination of the Review and Discipline Committee.)

In the event the Review and Discipline Committee determines a possible referee assault case exists, the Committee will forward its findings to the FYSA office. ***Upon verification of an allegation of assault by FYSA, the person is automatically suspended until the hearing is held on the assault.*** FYSA will immediately notify the applicable RVP with the direction to schedule a hearing on the matter within thirty (30) days. Any delay in scheduling the hearing within the thirty (30) day timeframe must be approved by the chairperson of the FYSA Review and Discipline Committee. ***Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind the automatic suspension.***

At the completion of the hearing, the RVP will forward a copy of the findings to the FYSA office and will notify the accused in writing of the findings of the hearing panel. (FYSA will inform the SYRA of the results of the hearing.) FYSA's State Office upon verification that all requirements of Section 600 have been complied with will send a copy of the decision to the FYSA Review & Discipline Committee in order that its file may be also closed

If the accused is found guilty of assault, notification will include information as to the next level of appeal, as per USSF Bylaw 705 which is directly to the Appeals Committee of the USSF.

In the event the Review and Discipline Committee determines a case of referee abuse exists, the Committee will forward its findings to the FYSA office. FYSA will immediately forward the report along with the player/coach pass, if applicable, to the appropriate RVP who will, based on the report, immediately impose sanctions of not less than a six (6) game or three (3) month suspension, whichever is longer. The RVP may impose greater sanctions for repeat offenders or if the situations warrants; however, sanctions of more than six (6) games or three (3) months will require that a hearing be held, unless waived by the accused. When sanctions are imposed, the RVP will, within

seven (7) days, notify the accused and the appropriate DC in writing of said sanctions and the right of appeal of this decision to FYSA's Protest and Appeal Committee as per FYSA Rule 605 inclusive. The player/coach pass will be forwarded to the appropriate DC to hold until proper notification of games served is presented. Proper notification is accomplished by way of game reports indicating that a red card/sanction is being served. When such notification is presented, the pass will be immediately returned to the player/coach/manager.

In the event that the Review and Discipline Committee determines that neither referee assault nor abuse occurred, the Committee will notify the FYSA office of such. FYSA will immediately forward the player/coach/manager's pass to the appropriate DC who will return the pass to the appropriate club/league. If sanctions are required as a result of actions not determined to be that of referee assault or abuse, the club/league will handle these separately and according to FYSA, and/or club/league rules.