


## REFEREE ABUSE POLICY: ZERO TOLERANCE

### Referee Conduct & Expectations – AYSO Region 1408

#### Our Referees Are Volunteers


- AYSO referees are trained volunteers who ensure that games are conducted safely, fairly, and in a way that supports player development and enjoyment—for players, coaches, and spectators alike.
- Referee experience and style may vary based on their training, background, and personality. Regardless of those differences, referees are empowered under Law 5 of the Laws of the Game to:
  1. Enforce the rules of the match
  2. Make final decisions on judgment calls
  3. Address inappropriate behavior from coaches, spectators, or players

 Video or photo evidence cannot overrule a referee's decision. If the referee says the ball crossed the line, it did—for the purposes of the game—even if your video says otherwise.

### Coach & Spectator Behavior Expectations

Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their sidelines, including parents and spectators.

 Encouragement is welcome.

 Verbal abuse of referees—or anyone—is never acceptable.

#### What's allowed:

- Saying “thank you”, offering polite feedback, or respectfully asking questions in regards to call, after a match

#### What's not allowed:

- Criticizing a referee before, during, or after the game
- Yelling, rude language, or showing disapproval with gestures
- Approaching referees to challenge calls

If concerns arise, they must follow this chain of communication:

1. Parents speak to their child's coach
2. Coaches may escalate to the Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) or Regional Commissioner

### Zero Tolerance for Abuse

AYSO maintains a strict zero tolerance policy for abuse toward referees, especially our youth referees. Abuse includes:

- Verbal attacks or criticism
- Negative body language
- Disruptive sideline behavior

If abuse is reported, the Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) will investigate and escalate the issue to the Disciplinary Committee, which will recommend appropriate actions.

### Misconduct & Disciplinary Action

Depending on the severity of the incident, disciplinary measures may include:

- Verbal or written warning
- Mentoring or behavioral expectations
- Suspension from 1 or more games
- Temporary or lifetime ban from all AYSO activities

During a suspension:

- The individual may not attend games or practices
- Those who are fully banned may not attend any AYSO function for the duration of the ban.

**If an adult directs inappropriate behavior toward a youth referee, immediate and stricter sanctions will be considered—including possible suspension of the adult involved.**

**Let's model respect and positivity—for our referees, our players, and each other.**

