

GNWSA ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Referee Policies:

The following referee procedures will be followed by *all* Greater Northwest Soccer Association referees at all GNWSA and NMCSL outdoor soccer matches officiated at Harmony Park, Justin Park, and the Roanoke Soccer Complex.

Zero Tolerance:

All persons responsible for a team and spectators (head coach, assistant coaches, and team managers) shall support the referee team (center referee (center/head), assistant referees (linesmen/ARs)). Failure to do so will undermine the referee's authority and potentially create a hostile environment for players, the referees, and all other participants and spectators. Consequently, the following policy is in effect:

No one is to address the referee during the match!!!

Exceptions: *For Persons Responsible for team (Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager)*

During the match:

- Responding to a referee who initiates a communication
- Making Substitutions
- Pointing out **emergencies or safety issues**

At half-time or at the end of a match:

- The **head coach (or assistant coach in the absence of the head coach)** may ask a referee to explain a rule(s) in a polite and constructive way. This is not an invitation to debate.
- Polite and friendly feedback can be given to a referee.
- Absolutely NO sarcasm, harassment, cursing, belittling, or intimidation will be tolerated.

Penalties (coaches and team managers):

- 1st Serious Infraction – Caution or Dismissal depending on seriousness of infraction (Dissent = Caution; Offensive, insulting, abusive = Dismissal)
- 1st Minor Infraction – A verbal warning will be issued.
- 2nd Minor Infraction – Dismissal of spectator and coach. A team official (coach, assistant coach, or manager) will escort the ejected coach or manager from the field and complex and ensure they remain out of sight and sound.

Note: it is important to remember that the seriousness of the infraction is solely in the opinion of the referee responsible for the match. There **is no redress** of a caution or Dismissal at the field to the head referee, a field marshal, or any GNWSA Board Member. The only avenue for appeal is a properly constituted Appeals & Disciplinary hearing conducted according to the GNWSA or NMCSL Playing Rules or By-Laws as appropriate.

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Exceptions: *For Spectators*

During the match:

- Referee initiates a communication
- Pointing out **emergencies or safety issues** (again, should be initiated by coach/assistant or team managers)

Penalties: *For Spectators*

- 1st Infraction – Referee, field marshal, or GNWSA board member has the authority to stop the match and ask the Coach to quiet the offending spectator.
- 2nd Infraction – Referee, field marshal, or GNWSA board member shall instruct the Coach and the spectator to leave the field. The referee shall abandon the match if either does not leave the field (i.e. out of sight and sound). A team official (coach, assistant coach or manager) shall escort the ejected spectator from the field and complex and ensure they remain out of sight and sound.

Note: Any caution, ejection, or dismissal requires a signed NTSSA Outdoor Misconduct Report detailing the incident. Include just the facts and what was said verbatim, especially if the language is profane, foul, or threatening. In cases where a match is abandoned by the referee, the status of the match can ONLY be determined by the proper League or Association authority.

Note: Referees must adhere to the USSF Code of Ethics: Point 2: I will conduct myself honorably at all times and maintain the dignity of my position. Anyone who determines a referee is not following this code should immediately report this to a board member, preferably Director or Referees.

All cautions, ejections, and dismissals will be submitted to the GNWSA Appeals & Discipline Director within 72 hours for disciplinary review.

Your signature below states that you have read the GNWSA Zero Tolerance Policy and will agree to the rules therein:

Name Printed

Age Division/Team Name

Signature

Date