



Coaches' Code of Conduct

The Board of Directors of Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association, Incorporated (Mass Youth Soccer) and the leaders of the affiliated Leagues are concerned about the conduct of all coaches and referees during games at all levels, from recreational to premier to ODP.

We want to ensure that games are fair, positive and enjoyable experiences for all of the children and adults involved. A soccer game should be friendly and unifying - a spirited social and athletic occasion for players, coaches, referees and spectators.

To clarify expectations of coach conduct, we jointly expect all coaches to conform to this code of conduct.

- Before, during and after the game, be an example of dignity, patience and positive spirit.
- Before a game, introduce yourself to the opposing coach and to the referee.
- During the game, you are responsible for the sportsmanship of your players. If one of your players is disrespectful, irresponsible or overly aggressive, take the player out of the game at least long enough for him/her to calm down.
- During the game, you are also responsible for the conduct of the parents of your players. It is imperative to explain acceptable player and parent behavior in a preseason meeting.
- Encourage them to applaud and cheer for good plays by either team. Discourage them and you may need to be forceful and direct from yelling at players and the referee.
- During the game, you are also responsible for the conduct of spectators rooting for your team.
- During the game, do not address the referee at all. If you have a small issue, discuss it with the referee calmly and patiently after the game.
- If you have a major complaint, or if you think the referee was unfair, biased, unfit or incompetent, report your opinion to your League. Your reactions will be taken seriously if they are presented objectively and formally.
- After the game, thank the referee and ask your players to do the same.

We stress two points:

1) Referees - especially young and inexperienced ones - are like your players and yourself, in that they need time to develop. You can play an important role in helping them to improve by letting them concentrate on the game. You can help by encouraging them, by accepting their inevitable, occasional mistakes and by offering constructive post-game comments. On the other hand, you could discourage and demoralize the referees by criticizing their decisions, by verbally abusing them and inciting - or even accepting - your own players' overly aggressive behavior.

2) Your example is powerful, for better or worse. If you insist on fair play, if you concentrate on your players' enjoyment of the game and their overall, long term development, and if you support the referee, your players and their parents will notice. If you encourage (or allow) your players to play outside the rules, if you're overly concerned about results, and if you criticize the referee harshly, your players and their parents will also notice.

Think about what you're doing during a game! Uphold the Spirit of the Game! If you follow the expectations described above, the spirit of the game will be alive and well in Massachusetts and will grow, along with the enjoyment of all.

Coaches who don't follow the expectations described above will be disciplined or removed.

Coach's Signature

Date

21. Coach and Fan Conduct (Zero Tolerance Policy)

a) It is the responsibility of **ALL** coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and spectators (supporters) in all matches. Abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting, harassment, intimidation/taunting, racial or ethnic slurs and other behavior detrimental to the game will not be tolerated. A coach's responsibility for referee support and spectator control includes the times prior to, during and after the game at the field and surrounding areas. Failure to do so will undermine the referee's authority and has the potential of creating a hostile environment for players, the referee and all other participants and spectators.

c) Therefore, the basic policy is that persons responsible for a team and spectators will not address the referee at all during the play of the game.

- Exceptions for persons responsible for a team (Coaches and Assistant Coaches)

During the game:

- Responding to a referee initiating communication
- Making Substitutions
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues

- Exceptions for Spectators:

During the game:

- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues
- d) Coaches are highly encouraged to submit referee evaluations (good and bad) with-in 48 hours of the completion of the match – see MYSL rule 31.

MYSL recommends that the referee deal with coach(es) and spectator(s) infractions in accordance with IFAB Law 5 of the Game.

If the referee abandons the match, directs a person to leave the area, or issues a caution; the referee shall send a misconduct report for review – see MYSL Rule 29. MYSL asks that the information provided by the referee in the misconduct report be sufficient and detailed to determine follow-up actions required by the Commissioners, Age Directors and/or Sportsmanship Committee.

22. Ejections

a) In the case of a player or coach ejection, the referee shall send the passcard (Spring Season only) to the respective Commissioner immediately following the game. At the same time, the referee shall also submit a USSF misconduct report to the Commissioner and other appropriate League Officials.

i) An ejection not covered by Rule 23 will carry an automatic one (1) game suspension, unless the Commissioner imposes additional suspensions.

ii) The suspension will start with the first game following the ejection.

iii) The Commissioner will hold the passcard and the player (or parent) shall make arrangements to pick-up his/her passcard.

iv) If the Commissioner considers the offense to be of a more serious nature, he/she shall refer the matter to the Sportsmanship Committee who will hear the case of all parties concerned and decide upon appropriate action.

b) Coaches or assistant coaches who are ejected from a game/dismissed from the match must leave the playing complex and may not in any way continue to coach. Failure to comply could result in permanent suspension from the MYSL.

c) A coach, assistant coach or player who has been ejected or suspended may not return to any team in any capacity until such time as the suspension has been lifted. Failure to abide by this could result in permanent suspension from the MYSL.