

Loudoun Soccer Preseason Referee Meeting *Fall 2025*

Today's Agenda

All Referees (15 min)

- LOTG/ROC change reminders
- Referee Director Update
- Mentoring
- USSF Referee Abuse Policy
- Referee Code of Conduct

New Referees (45 min)

- Getting started
- Allowing yourself room to learn
- Tips to navigating your first weekend
- How to get games and get paid!
- Q&A



All Referees | Fall Updates

- Rules of Competition

8 Sec Rule

Travel: varies by league, review prior to working matches; Be sure to verify

Consult [Loudoun Soccer Referee Info Center](#) for details

- Only use the [one-page summary](#) or age-level guidelines
- Top Tier referee assignments change (GA/GA Aspire)
 - Must have an assessment on file to upgrade
 - Request upgrade at refdc@loudounsoccer.com or rjohnson@loudounsoccer.com



All Referees | Mentoring

- Certified USSF Mentor Cadre & Senior Adult Officials
- Mentors...
 - HELP you work on parts of your game to move up to more challenging (and rewarding) levels
 - ANSWER questions you have at the fields during or after matches
 - RECOGNIZE strong performance
 - ENCOURAGE you to learn and expand your referee skills
 - PROVIDE a refereeing resource you can use throughout your career
- Good reasons to ask for a mentor (again, refdc@loudounsoccer.com)
 - You're new and you're not feeling comfortable yet
 - You have some specific areas of officiating you're trying to improve
 - You want to work higher level matches now or in the future





3

U.S. REFEREEING WAY

8-Second Goalkeeper Control

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct





8-Seconds Change - Reasoning

- Around the world, goalkeepers are holding the ball longer without intervention from referees
- Especially when their team is winning, goalkeepers often delay restarting play – specifically by collecting the ball differently at the end of the match than they did at the beginning
- This change in the LOTG is designed to reduce time wasting by the goalkeeper, promote continuous play, and enhance the overall experience for spectators

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IFAB New Law Change

The Law

A corner kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds before releasing it. A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) when:

- The ball is between their hands/arms or between their hand(s)/arm(s) and any surface (e.g. ground, own body)
- Holding the ball in their outstretched open hand(s)
- Bouncing it on the ground or throwing it in the air

The referee will decide when the goalkeeper has control of the ball, and the eight seconds begin and will visually count down the last five seconds with a raised hand.

A goalkeeper cannot be challenged by an opponent when in control of the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s).

Explanation

If a goalkeeper has control of the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds, the referee will now award a corner kick (rather than an indirect free kick) on the side of the field closest to the goalkeeper's position when penalized. There is no disciplinary action unless the goalkeeper repeatedly commits the offence.

To assist the goalkeeper, the referee will signal the final five seconds using a raised hand.

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Key New Concepts

- Goalkeepers have 8-seconds to release the ball once they have clear control
- Referees will signal the final 5-seconds as a public countdown, serving as a warning to prevent time-wasting
- If the goalkeeper exceeds the time limit, the restart is a corner kick for the opposing team





When the Countdown Begins

The countdown begins when the goalkeeper has clear control of the ball and is able to restart play

e.g. they can stand up and are not crowded by opponents

Routine or simple save

Countdown starts immediately

Difficult or diving save

Countdown is delayed to confirm clear control of the ball

Referee Advice

Prevention

Communicate and Warn

Proactive

Early Message

Presence

Be in Eyesight

Practical

Consider whether Tactical



Countdown Process

- Once the goalkeeper has clear control, the visual countdown begins after the initial 3-seconds
 - Referees should use this time to get into position
- For the final 5-seconds, referees will perform a visual countdown with their arm raised above their head
 - To be seen visually, after showing the five fingers lower the arm, then change to 4 fingers, repeat until the 5 seconds is complete or the ball is in play



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RESPECT THE CALL

PROTECTING OUR REFEREES

With referee abuse on the rise for youth and amateur matches, it's time to take a stand.

Referees are essential to soccer, but far too often risk their emotional and physical well-being in service to the game.

Win, lose, or draw, we're in this together.

When you take your anger out on the referee, everybody loses, and the call on the field still stands.

Referee abuse is damaging for everyone involved – and for the future of soccer.

Thank you for doing your part.

CONTENTS

03 PENALTY OVERVIEW

05 NON-PHYSICAL ABUSE

- 06 Level 1: Verbal Taunting
- 07 Level 2: Harassment/Intimidation
- 08 Level 3: Threats/Derogatory Language
- 09 Level 4: Offensive or Discriminatory Act

10 PHYSICAL ABUSE

- 11 Level 1: Minor or Slight Touching
- 12 Level 2: Intentional Confrontation
- 13 Level 3: Violent Contact

14 REPORTING ABUSE GUIDELINES



PENALTY OVERVIEW

The Penalties Matrix defines consequences associated with physical and non-physical offenses against Referees.

NON-PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

NON-PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Insulting, Belittling, Insinuating or Taunting Behavior Undermining Referee Authority	2	
Harassment, Intimidation, Retaliation, Abusive, or Threatening (Non Physical) Language	4	
Aggression, Attacking, Derogatory, Cyberbullying, Daring or Threatening (Physical / Violence) Language	6	6 - 24 Months
Offensive or Discriminatory Act	10	12 - 24 Months

PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Minor or Slight Deliberate Touching	3	1 - 6 Months
Pushing, Grabbing, Pulling, Squeezing, Pinching, Lightly Slapping, Use of Object in Non Striking Manner, or Physical Property Damage	10	6 - 24 Months
Hitting, Punching, Elbowing, Kicking, Biting, Spitting, Choking, Tackling, Throwing or Use of Object or Any Part of Body (Forearm, Knee, Head) in a Striking Manner		12 Months - Lifetime

KEY PENALTY FACTORS

- Single offenses are at **minimum** the prescribed game penalty or time penalty for non red zone offenses
- Penalties can be **both game and time** depending on severity / circumstances
- Second time offenders receive **double punishment**
- Third time offenders receive a **lifetime ban**
- More than one offense at the same time is at **least** the punishment for the most serious offense
- Offenses against minors are automatically subject to a **"minor multiplier"** resulting in triple punishment
- One offense warning per league to be managed by states and leagues collaboratively
- Game consequences are **inclusive of 1 game penalty for any red cards given**
- Optionality for 50% penalty for first offense from a minor

Please follow your current reporting structure – updated reporting procedure will be a part of Phase 3.

(*) Disclaimer: These are only a few examples of abuse – other actions or statements may also fall into this category.

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NON-PHYSICAL ABUSE

Contact doesn't have to be made for damage to occur. Non-physical abuse – hurtful language and aggressive behavior – has no place in our game. It disrupts matches, interferes with the referee's ability to do their job, and it hurts the game for everyone. Left unchecked, non-physical abuse takes an emotional toll and has the potential to escalate into physically dangerous situations. The updated policy is designed to eliminate this behavior.

NON-PHYSICAL ABUSE

LEVEL 1: VERBAL TAUNTING

Speech or gestures intended to belittle the referee, damage their credibility, and undermine their ability to effectively officiate the game.

DEFINITION

Insulting, Belittling, Insinuating or Taunting Behavior
Undermining Referee Authority.

EXAMPLES

- **Questioning Competence:**
"Do you even know the rules?"
- **Mocking Appearance or Abilities:**
"Did you forget your glasses?"
- **Accusations of Bias:**
"What's the other team paying you?"
- **Dismissive Language:**
"You suck."
- **Aggressive Tone:**
"You're the worst ref we've ever had."

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

If you have concerns about a call, respectfully ask the referee for clarification. Share your perspective calmly, avoiding yelling, insults, or offensive gestures.

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NON-PHYSICAL ABUSE

LEVEL 2: HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION

Occurs when language or body language is intended to make a referee feel unsafe but where the threat of violence remains unspoken.

DEFINITION

Harassment, Intimidation, Retaliation, Abusive or Threatening (Non-Physical) Language.

EXAMPLES

- **Using Expletives:**
"That call was complete \$H*T!"
- **Personal Attacks:**
"You're a F-ing joke!"
- **Escalating Intensity:**
"You can't make a single good f***** call!"
- **Getting In The Referee's Face.**

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Take a moment to gather yourself before you speak to the referee. Ask for clarification calmly, aiming for constructive communication rather than causing conflict.

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LEVEL 3: THREATS/DEROGATORY LANGUAGE

When aggressive language or threats of violence enter the mix – or when abuse spills online.

DEFINITION

Aggression, Attacking, Derogatory, Cyberbullying, Doxing, or Threatening (Physical / Violence) Language.

EXAMPLES

- **Threatening To Inflict Harm On A Referee:**
 - “You’re gonna pay for that!”
 - “I’ll see you in the parking lot”
 - “I’m going to shove that card down your throat!”
 - “You better watch your back!”
- **Public Attacks Online** such as uploading a post to social media attacking the referee.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

When you feel frustrated by a referee’s call, take a moment to pause and breathe. Reflect on how your reaction impacts your experience and the overall atmosphere of the game for everyone involved.

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LEVEL 4: OFFENSIVE OR DISCRIMINATORY ACT

U.S. Soccer is inclusive of everyone. Discrimination – attacking referees for who they are, or offending their dignity – will not be tolerated.

DEFINITION

Discriminatory or derogatory words or actions on account of race, skin color, ethnicity, nationality, social origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, language, or religion.

EXAMPLES

- Racial or ethnic slurs.
- Offensive gestures.
- Homophobic language.
- Using harmful or sexist stereotypes.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Remember that soccer is for everyone. We're all human, and everybody deserves the opportunity to enjoy the game without being made to feel bad about who they are.

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PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse makes the game unsafe for everyone. It's also easy to avoid. Outside of friendly handshakes, there's never a reason to touch the referee. Any unwanted physical contact is considered physical abuse. Physical violence can also result in criminal charges, lawsuits, or medical liability.



LEVEL 1: MINOR OR SLIGHT TOUCHING

Even minor deliberate touches can be unwanted and make referees feel unsafe and are considered physical abuse.

DEFINITION

Minor or Slight Deliberate Touching.

EXAMPLES

- Tapping the referee's shoulder to get their attention.
- Touching the referee's chest with your finger.
- Grabbing the referee's jersey to get their attention.
- Intentionally bumping lightly into the referee.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Respectfully get the referee's attention without touching them – and, even in the heat of the moment, make a conscious effort to keep your hands to yourself.

Disclaimer: These are only a few examples of abuse – other actions or statements may also fall into this category.





LEVEL 2: INTENTIONAL CONFRONTATION

Escalation of using contact to intimidate or provoke a physical confrontation – or causing damage to property – without the intent to cause bodily harm.

DEFINITION

Pushing, Grabbing, Pulling, Squeezing, Pinching, Lightly Slapping, Use of Object in Non-Striking Manner, or Physical Property Damage

EXAMPLES

- Shoving the referee.
- Forcefully grabbing the referee's arm.
- Throwing a water bottle at the ground in front of the referee.
- Dumping the referee's bag into a trashcan.
- Aggressively grabbing the referee's jersey.
- Following the referee to the parking lot or to their car.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Understand that this behavior not only won't change the outcome on the field, it will keep you out of the game for a long time. Channel that energy to drive better on-field performance. Remove yourself from the situation if you need to calm down.

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LEVEL 3: VIOLENT CONTACT

Malicious, violent contact intended to cause bodily harm – this is considered assault and can result in criminal punishment, legal suits, and medical liability.

DEFINITION

Hitting, Punching, Elbowing, Kicking, Biting, Spitting, Choking, Tackling, Throwing or Use of Object or Any Part of Body (Forearm, Knee, Head) in a Striking Manner

EXAMPLES

- Kicking the referee's shin.
- Throwing a punch at the referee.
- Placing hands on the neck to choke the referee.
- Throwing a water bottle with intent to hit the referee.
- Intentionally kicking the ball at the referee.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Before physical abuse ever escalates to this level, there are plenty of opportunities to choose another course of action. Remove yourself from the situation and give yourself time for your anger to defuse before doing something with serious long-term consequences.

Disclaimer: These are only a few examples of abuse – other actions or statements may also fall into this category.





REPORTING ABUSE

We understand the vast majority of players, coaches, and spectators already do the right thing. A small minority hurts the game for the rest of us – but it's up to all of us to uphold the integrity of the game. **With the updated policy, players, coaches, and spectators are encouraged to report abuse. The penalty framework only take effect if abuse is reported. We're asking you to do your part to support referees by reporting any instance of referee abuse.**

GUIDELINES



- Understand what does and doesn't constitute abuse – as well as the definitions for the different categories of abuse.

- Submit written reports of the abuse within 48 hours of the incident if possible. Include the following:

- Match details, including team information, age group, score, and date.
- Detailed description of the incident and the behavior that constitutes abuse.
- Unedited audio or video clips if available.

- We will be providing details on the appropriate designee to submit reports to, as well as more in-depth procedure for reporting abuse as part of Phase 3 of the policy update. For now follow your current reporting structure.

- The Competition Authority will review all documents and submit the following to the Member Organization:

- All documents, exhibits, and other evidence in the case.
- Copies of all rules, procedures, and bylaws used to support the charges and conduct the hearing.
- The notice of charges and/or hearing provided the defendant/appellant.
- The decision of the hearing body and any appeals decisions.

- Athletes reported for abuse will have an opportunity to appeal.

Code of Conduct

USSF CODE OF ETHICS FOR REFEREES

I will always honor an assignment or any other contractual obligation

- Turnbacks – Less than 3 days is considered a late turnback (possible ½ game fine); emergencies are excepted
- No Shows – Full Game Fine / Possible Suspension
- Repeat Offenders will be removed from Loudoun Soccer assignments



Returning Referees | Questions?



New Referee Info



4/2/2

New Referees | Club Expectations

- Welcome to the best team on the field!
- What we expect you to get right: safety
 - Goals anchored and weighted
 - No jewelry
 - Thunder and lightning policy
- What we expect you to get wrong: everything else
 - Give yourself permission to make mistakes. It's the only way to get better
 - Do your best to prepare
 - Tell your crew you're new
 - Self-assess and, if you suspect you've gotten something wrong, use your resources
 - Your crew
 - Referee friends or mentors
 - LOTG online
 - ROCs online
 - Send us emails!



Best Games for New Youth Refs

- Center Referee for GRK-GR4 (u6 - u10)
- Assistant Referee for GR5-GR8 (u11 - u14)
- Travel when more experienced (NCSL)

- Stay informed

<https://www.loudounsoccer.com/referees>

Announcements in Assignr

- Bottom of home page
- Button at bottom of App



Assignors at Loudoun Soccer

- GRK to GR6 in Ashburn & Western Loudoun
Barry Hunt - bhunt@loudounsoccer.com
- GRK to GR6 in Leesburg & South Riding
Jim Kennedy – jtkennedy@loudounsoccer.com
- GR7 and older rec, travel, adults
Tammy Mitchell – refassignor@loudounsoccer.com



Getting Game Assignments

- Three steps to getting game assignments
 - Request games in Assignr.com
 - Email the appropriate assignor listing the date, field & time of games requested.
 - If assigned games, accept within 48 hours
- Be patient while the assignors review the requests
- You will not get everything you request
 - We need to be fair with assignments
 - Your requests may not fit your abilities
 - Similar games on nearby field
- More on requesting game in later slide



Turnback of Games

- This is a JOB ... Please take it seriously and be professional.
- Email assignor
 - As soon as you can
 - Less than 3 days notice is a late turnback
 - Injury or illness is an exception
 - Could be fined for late turnback (half of game pay)
- No show
 - Not showing up for game and not telling anyone
 - Will be fined (all of game pay)
- COMMUNICATE



Game Day

- Check field directory (maps)
- Check field status & closures
- Arrive 30 minutes before game
- Have your assignment info handy
- Have assignor's contact information
- No-show teams – 15 minute rule



Fields

FIELD STATUS

Field Status

Last Updated: 2 SEP

Arcola ES

OPEN



Balls Bluff ES

OPEN



Bles Park

OPEN



Blue Ridge MS

OPEN



Bolen Park

OPEN



FIELD DIRECTORY

Arcola ES

41740 Tall
Cedars
Parkway
Aldie Virginia

GRASS

[View Field Map](#)

[Get Directions](#)

Hanson Park

23401
Hanson Park
Drive Aldie
Virginia
United
States 20105

Field 1
& 2:
TURF
All
Others:
GRASS

[View Field Map](#)

[Get Directions](#)



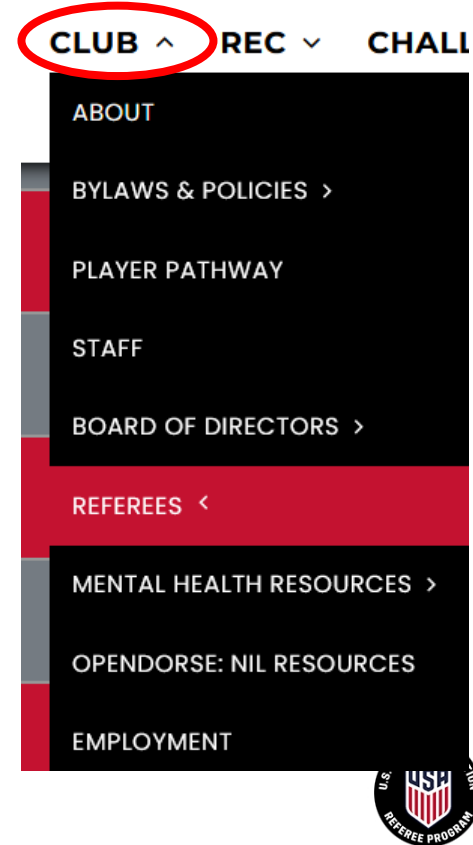
Other Items

- Mentoring available
 - New Referees
 - Moving up to older games
 - Let your assignor know you want a mentor
- Don't be afraid to centers younger games (GRK to GR4)
- Goals must be anchored
- Weather rules (thunder and lightening)



Pay

- Pay & Bonus
- Spring & Fall
 - Every two or three weeks
 - Bonus in last payment for the season
- Assignr – must complete to be paid
 - W-9 Form
 - Bank Account
- New Refs – extra \$50 for 6 bonus points
- Center Refs – must submit game reports



Pay Rates & Bonus Amounts

Recreational

(including High School ages)

Age	Center	Assistant	Bonus Points
GR1	20	n/a	0.5
GR2	20	n/a	0.5
GR3	30	20*	0.5
GR4	30	20*	0.5
GR5	45	20	0.75
GR6	45	20	0.75
GR7	50	25	1
GR8	50	25	1
U16	57	32	1.25
U19	65	40	1.25

* tournament only

NCSL*

Age	Center	Assistant	Bonus Points
U9	60	-	0.75
U10	60	-	0.75
U11	70		1
U12	70		1
U13	70	35	1
U14	70	35	1
U15	80	40	1.25
U16	80	40	1.25
U17	90	45	1.5
U18	90	45	1.5
U19	90	45	1.5

Total
Bonus
Points

Bonus
Amount

6	\$70
10	\$90
15	\$120
20	\$150
25	\$180
30	\$215
35	\$250
40	\$290
45	\$330
50	\$370
55	\$410
65	\$450
75	\$500
85	\$550



Select your name top right, then My Account

Personal Information

Travel Restriction	None	[Edit]
Email	mitchellbd3@gmail.com ✓📧	[Edit]
Email	Add an Email Address	
Account Login	bmitchell5 (Brad Mitchell)	
W9	On File	
Bank Account	On File	
Account Key	You can use your Account Key to ask an assignor to add you to their site as an official. Just share this link: https://app.assignr.com/q/account/d62e8308... Copy to Clipboard	


→


→

→


→


[Edit] [Change Password] [Enable 2 Step Auth] [API Access]

 **Brad Mitchell (bmitchell5)** ▼



Brad Mitchell

 **My Account**

 **Messages**

Edit:

- Phone numbers
- Address
- Emergency contact
- Date of birth
- Picture

SAVE at the bottom



Assignr.com



Question mark, View documentation

- Request Games

Follow-up with an email to the appropriate assignor

- Date
- Field
- Time
- Position
- Other options if requested games not available

Accept/decline the games quickly (48-hours or they auto-decline)

- Help Wanted emails



Requesting Games

- Games, All Unassigned Games

> Filter Games:

Start Date <input type="text" value="Apr 1 2024"/>	End Date <input type="text"/>	Venue <input type="text" value="Choose Venue"/>
Sub-Venue <input type="text" value="Choose Sub-Venue"/>	Game ID <input type="text"/>	Age Group <input type="text" value="Rec: GR6 (u12) x"/>
League <input type="text" value="Rec x"/>	Gender <input type="text" value="Choose Gender"/>	Game Type <input type="text" value="Choose Game Type"/>
Home Team <input type="text" value="Choose Home Team"/>	Team <input type="text" value="Choose Team"/>	Assignor <input type="text" value="Choose Assignor(s)"/>
Game Status <input type="text" value="Active x"/>	Show/Hide Unassigned Games <input type="text" value="Show Only Unassigned v"/>	



Requesting Games



Sat Apr 6 2:45 PM

**@ Bolen Park 20-21
20**

✓ R: Assigned

○ AR: [Request It](#)

○ AR: [Request It](#)

Rec: GR5 (u11): GR5BCHLEEPURC Hasenei [Home] vs. GR5BCHSRC Alvarado [Away]

B, Rec, Challenge

Assignor: Jim Kennedy



Sat Apr 6 1:15 PM

**@ Loudoun Soccer
Park
Micro 04**

○ R: [Request It](#)

Rec: GR2 (u8): GR2BLEE B FRESHWATER [Home] vs. GR2BSR F LAZAREVICH [Away]

M, Rec

Assignor: Barry Hunt



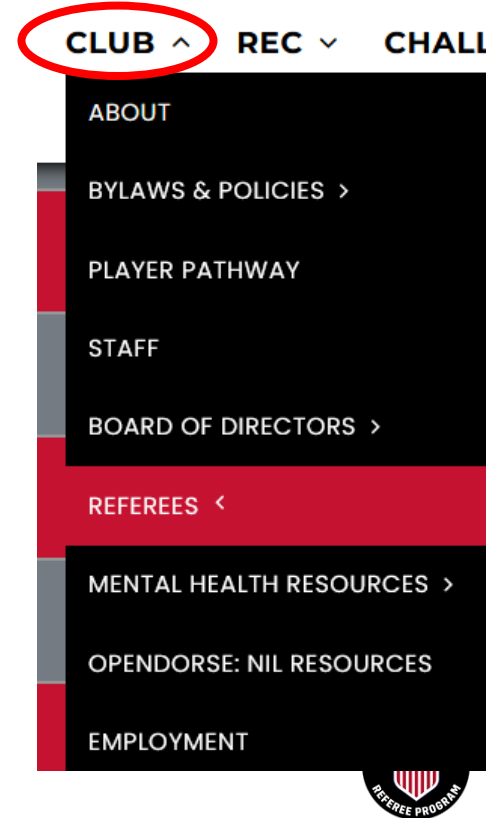
Mobile App

- Profile
- Games
- Availability
- Directory of Officials and Assignors
- Game Reports
- Announcements
- Financials (payments)



Summary

- <https://www.loudounsoccer.com/referees>
- Announcements in Assignr
- COMMUNICATE
- Include first and last name
- Have fun
- Questions?



New Referees | Common Mistakes To Avoid

Center Refs

- Be early
- Set out all gear the night before
- Walk the field
- What must be fixed: safety
 - Unweighted goals
 - Dangerous field condition
 - Jewelry
- What is optional
 - Properly lined fields and mowed grass
 - Corner flags & nets
- Blow your whistle twice as loud as you think
- Move touchline-to-touchline when solo
- Introduce yourself to coaches, review ROCs
- Have a good pregame conversation with your crew, if you have one

Assistant Refs

- Be early
- Set out all gear the night before
- Walk the field. What must be fixed and what's optional is the same but help your referee if he/she doesn't spot safety issues
- Focus on the offside line (2:1 'rule')
- Stay square to the field except when sprinting
- Signal with confidence (straight arms)
- Confident signal doesn't mean fast. Be patient.
- Follow all balls to goal line.
- Ask questions during pregame conversation with referee

