

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE and APPEAL PROCESS

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. Referee send-off reports are reviewed by members of the regional staff, known as the Conduct Committee.
2. Conduct Committee assesses appropriate penalties based on published minimum guidelines.
3. Conduct Committee findings are recorded at tournament headquarters.
4. **No appeals are allowed if suspensions are within the published minimum guidelines.**
5. Conduct Committee has the authority to impose more severe penalties if warranted.
6. Coaches/Players must be notified as soon as possible of extended penalties. The Regional Tournament Committee will notify the state representative, whose responsibility it is to notify the player or coach.
7. Regional Tournament Protest & Appeals Committee will hear appeals. The P&A Committee will be chaired by the Regional Deputy Director. Members of the P&A Committee will be randomly selected state representatives.

PROTEST & APPEALS PROCEDURE

1. All questions relating to qualifications of competitors, to interpretations of rules, to suspensions, and to disputes or protests shall be referred to the Tournament P&A Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.
2. To be valid and eligible for consideration, protests must be verbally lodged with the referee and the opposing coach at the game site within fifteen (15) minutes after the end of the game. Additionally, the protest regarding a game must also be filed in writing with the Tournament P&A Committee within two hours after the completion of the game in question. If the protest or appeal involves a suspension, it must be filed with the P&A Committee by 11:00 AM on the day following the game involving the suspension. If the protest or appeal is based on a game on the final day of the tournament, the protest or appeal must be received by the Regional Deputy Director within seven (7) days of the end of the tournament. The Tournament P&A Committee will be convened by conference call to hear the issue.

The only exception to the above rule involves protests relating to the grounds, goal posts, bars and their appurtenances of the game, which should be in writing and submitted to the referee and the opposing coach **prior to** the start of the game. All other P&A procedures still must be followed.

3. All protests and appeals shall include the following:
 - a fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in cash or certified check. No personal checks.
 - five (5) copies of the protest or appeal
 - five (5) copies of all information to be presented by witnesses
4. The Chairman of the Tournament P&A Committee shall notify teams or players of the committee's findings. Notification shall be via the state representative if the coach or player cannot be contacted.
5. A plea of ignorance to the rules of this competition is not sufficient grounds for protest or appeal.
6. The judgment decision of a game official cannot be protested.
7. Only participants involved in the match in question can submit a protest or an appeal.

SUSPENSION GUIDELINES

The Conduct Committee shall act on all disciplinary matters and shall have discretionary powers in determining disciplinary action applied to team personnel and players. Game suspensions listed below are to be regarded as the *minimum* for the charged offenses. Depending on the findings of the Conduct Committee, penalties may be increased according to the gravity of the infringements. When sent off the field of play and shown the red card for infringement of the "laws of the game", players and substitutes shall be disciplined by further game suspensions as follows:

Serious Foul Play

Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, intentionally impeding an opponent, denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity; denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by handling the ball.

All age groups: Suspend for a minimum of one (1) game.

Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, tripping, holding, unlawfully charging or pushing an opponent denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity; intentionally tripping, holding, pushing, unlawfully charging or tackling an opponent from behind or charging in a dangerous and violent manner.

All age groups: Suspend for a minimum of one (1) game.

Foul and Abusive Language

Examples include, but are not limited to, words uttered in frustration and, in the referee's opinion, loud enough to be heard outside the field of play.

All age groups: Suspend for a minimum of one (1) game.

Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, words or actions directed towards any person.

All age groups: Suspend for a minimum of one (1) game.

Second Cautionable Offense

Second yellow card after a previous yellow card in same game.

All age groups: Suspend for a minimum of one (1) game.

Violent Conduct

Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, spitting, or other unseemly act, on or at another person; striking or attempting to strike another player, team official or spectator, unlawfully entering the field of play during an altercation.

All age groups: Suspend for a minimum of two (2) games.

Pushing in an act of aggression, striking or attempting to strike a referee, linesperson or fourth official.

All age groups: Suspend for a minimum of one (1) year and review by the Board of Directors regarding further disciplinary action.

Any player, substitute or team official who refuses the referee's request for their name, or gives a false name, while the referee is gathering data to report on an infringement of the "laws of the game" involving them, shall have one (1) game added to the suspension that would normally be levied by the Conduct Committee.

In specific situations, the Conduct Committee may place an individual on probation, in addition to the suspension, for a period of time not to exceed the length of the suspension. The probationary period is to be served immediately following the suspension period and is intended to monitor an individual's degree of reformation. Should an individual on probation be sent off the field of play and shown the red card during the probationary period, the original suspension and probation shall be re-applied and no appeal will be heard.

Coaches and assistant coaches sent off the field of play for infringement of the "laws of the game" shall have one (1) game added to the suspension that would normally be levied against a player for a similar infringement.

"Club" coaches or coaches listed on multiple rosters who are suspended will serve their suspension during the next scheduled games involving the team they were coaching at the time of their suspension. If that team is no longer participating in the national championships, coaches will serve their suspensions with the next team they are coaching in the national championships.

Coaches who are serving suspensions cannot participate in any game activities related to the team from which they were suspended. Coaches are prohibited from participating in any pre-game activities and must remain out of game site during matches from which they are suspended. The use of cell phones for team contact is specifically prohibited.