

Policy 531-9—Misconduct Toward Game Officials

Section 1. General

Misconduct against referees may occur before, during and after the match, including travel to or from the match. Misconduct may occur also at later times when directly related to duties of a game official as a referee.

Section 2. Rule Application

(A) This policy shall supersede any inconsistent rules of Organization Members that pertain to assaults or abuse upon Federation referees, assistant referees, the manner and means of hearings, appeals, and rehearings in matters pertaining thereto.

(B) Nothing in this policy rule shall be construed to restrict or limit any league, event/tournament or Organization Member from applying equal or greater restrictions to anyone not listed in section 4(a)(1) of this policy (i.e., a spectator associated with a club or team).

(C) This policy shall not apply to players, coaches, managers, club officials, or league officials while participating in Professional League Member activities.

Section 3. Terms and References

As used in this policy --

(1) “Referee” includes the following:

(a) all currently registered USSF referees, assistant referees, fourth officials or others duly appointed to assist in officiating in a match.

(b) any non-licensed, non-registered person serving in an emergency capacity as a referee (under Rule 3040).

(c) any club assistant referee.

(2) “Hearing” means a meeting of at least three neutral members, one of whom is designated or elected to serve as chairman. The hearing shall be conducted pursuant to guidelines established by the Organization Member.

(3) (a) (i) Referee assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee.

(ii) For purposes of this policy, “intentional act” shall mean an act intended to bring about a result which will invade the interests of another in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.

(b) Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee’s uniform or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.

(4) (a) Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee’s property or equipment.

(b) Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: using foul or abusive language toward a referee that implies or threatens physical harm; spewing any beverage on a referee’s personal property; or spitting at (but not on) the referee

DEFINITIONS

Abuse:

Abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to an individual or their personal property.

- Abuse includes, but is not limited to individual conduct that while not threatening or implying physical harm, is nevertheless unacceptable behavior. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - Invading a person's personal space;
 - Using a loud voice in a detrimental manner;
 - Making comments in such a way as to demean the person or their position.
- Abuse shall include, but not be limited to, racial, ethnic, religious or gender slurs directed at one or more individuals.
- Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece" shall be deemed abuse.

Assault:

Assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon an individual.

- Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon an individual: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into an individual; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at an individual that could inflict injury; damaging an individual's clothing or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.
- A participant, for the purposes of this section of the Operating Documents, shall be defined as a registered player, the parent, relative or guardian of a registered player, a coach, assistant coach, trainer or team manager, a spectator, an officer of a Club, Association, District or member of the Board of Directors of this Association, referee, and any other person required to have Risk Management acceptance under the Washington Youth Soccer Operating Documents.
- For purposes of this section of the Operating Documents, "intentional act" shall mean an act intended to bring about a result which will invade the interests of another individual in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.