

MAYSA No Tolerance for Referee Abuse Policy

8.2 MAYSA No Tolerance Policy

MAYSA has created the No Tolerance Policy in an effort to decrease the abuse of referees. The purpose of this policy is to make clear that verbal abuse or negative criticism of referees is as unacceptable as verbal abuse or negative criticism of players. This policy adopts basic standard sanctions for improper conduct.

This policy is not intended to imply that referees are always “right” and the spectator or coach is always “wrong”. Just as players make mistakes during play and coaches may err in strategy or methodology, referees will make mistakes in officiating, particularly in the younger divisions where they are learning how to referee. Due to a persistent shortage of referees, a referee may be officiating at a higher level game than they are comfortable with. They must receive positive support from coaches and spectators to continue to grow as an official.

A Coach or spectator may only communicate in a positive way with a youth referee. The coach is responsible for ensuring all spectators associated with his/her team follow these guidelines relating to communication with a referee; especially a youth referee. A coach/spectator may not express any disagreement or dissatisfaction with the officiating to the youth referee. A coach/spectator may not, before, during, or after a game, discuss with a youth referee their critique of the referee's performance, other than to thank and compliment the referee.

If a coach, player or fan is harassing a referee, the referee has the right to take the following measures to cease harassment:

1. Go to the offending team's coach and ask them to control themselves or their personnel.
2. If the problem persists after the above measure is taken, the referee may go back to the coach and ask the offending party to remove themselves from the game.
3. If the problem persists after the above measures are taken, the referee may stop the game and the offending team forfeits. The MAYSA Board of Directors may then further sanction the offending team or individuals.

Please note, coaches, players and /or parents/spectators are highly discouraged from approaching or confronting referees at halftime or after the match for any reason other than retrieving player pass cards or saying ‘thank you’ and/or shaking hands. Any concerns or feedback regarding referees must be submitted via the MAYSA-provided portal at maysa.org: ‘Coach Referee Feedback Form’ in the ‘For Coaches and Managers’ section of the website.

In cases of egregious referee abuse (e.g., physical confrontation), information will immediately be forwarded to WYSA for investigation and discipline decisions.