



## Zero Tolerance Policy

**Purpose** - It is the desire of all the participating Leagues and Clubs within District VI (D6) for players, parents, coaches, referees and other spectators to be able to enjoy the sport of soccer in a safe and positive environment. Referees are a valuable part of our soccer program. Each coach, player, and spectator shall at all times support the Referee and assistant Referees. Negative or critical comments directed to any member of the Referee crew will not be tolerated.

The following guidelines are adopted to allow for sanctioning of coaches, players, and spectators for their violation of this Policy.

**1. Definitions** - A "Coach" is defined as any administrator on the team roster. A "Player" is defined as anyone listed on the team's roster not identified as an administrator, A "Spectator" is defined as any other individual present not already identified as a coach or player. An "affiliated player" is defined as a player who has a direct relationship with the spectator such as but not limited to, a parent, additional family member, or friend.

**2. Support of Referees** - No one is to address a Referee in a negative manner immediately before, during, or after the game. It is the responsibility of **ALL** coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players, and supporters in all matches. Abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting, 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.

**3. Coaches' Communications with the Referee and Assistant Referees** – Coaches, players, and sideline spectators may NOT address any member of the Referee crew during play except for:

- Responding to a Referee-initiated communication.
- Making a request for substitutions.
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues, such as an injured player on the field.
- To request clarification of any call, provided the request is courteous and non-argumentative.

A Referee may caution any coach for his/her failure to abide by this Zero-Tolerance Policy. Any coach who continues to violate this Policy may thereafter be dismissed from the game by the Referee.

A Referee may dismiss a coach for any egregious action, including, but not limited to, abusive language or any implied or actual threat of physical abuse. A prior warning is not required. The Referee shall simultaneously instruct the coach to leave the field.

**4. Spectator Communications with the Referee and Assistant Referees** - Negative or critical comments by spectators directed to any member of the Referee crew will not be tolerated.

A Referee may stop the game and request the assistance of all coaches to remind the spectators of this Zero Tolerance Policy.

If the comments by the spectators continue the Referee may thereafter stop the game, caution the Coach and direct the Coach to inform the spectators that if these comments continue that the spectators will be directed to leave the field. If this Policy continues to be violated the Referee may instruct a coach to direct the spectators to leave the field, and/or the Referee may dismiss the Coach and direct the coach to leave the field along with the offending spectators. If the ejected/dismissed person and/or spectators fail to leave the field, the Referee may abandon the game.

A Referee may dismiss from the game any spectator for any egregious action, including, but not limited to, abusive language or any implied or actual threat of physical abuse. A prior warning is not required. The referee shall simultaneously instruct the spectator to leave the field.

Thereafter, the ejected person must depart to a distance where he or she can no longer see or hear anything to do with the match. If the ejected person fails to leave the field, the Referee may abandon the game.

Any infractions by a spectator will result in an automatic notification to the credentialing Club or League PAD with the following recommendations for minimum sanctions.

1. Aggressively challenging a referees decision, either by raising his/her voice, gesturing or otherwise clearly demonstrating dissent:
  - First offense: Counseling by a Board Member of their home Club or League (Coach to provide name of adult to referee; refusal will result in coach serving a 1 game suspension.)
  - Second offense: Spectator suspended from attending affiliated player's games for remainder of season, on probation for 1 year
  - Third offense: Parent permanently suspended from attending affiliated player's games.
2. Aggressively challenging a referee's decision by initiating physical contact with a referee, to include bumping, pushing, shoving or striking anyway, or by directing foul language toward a referee:
  - First offense: Spectator suspended from attending affiliated player's games for 1 year, suspended for 1 year, on probation for 2 more years.

3. Confronting adults in a physical matter (as in item above, including the use of foul language) be they from the opposing team or his/her own team:
  - First offense: Spectator suspended from attending affiliated player's games for 1 year, on probation for 2 more years.
  - Second offense: Permanent suspension of affiliated player and spectator.
4. Striking or attempting to strike a player, either on his/her own team or an opponent
  - First offense: Permanent suspension of affiliated player and spectator.

**NOTE: IF SPECTATORS FAIL TO HONOR THEIR SUSPENSION FROM THEIR AFFILIATED PLAYER'S GAMES, THE PLAYER MAY LOSE THEIR PLAYING PRIVILEGES.**

**5. Team Captain** – This policy is not intended to restrict respectful communication between a team captain and a Referee. A Referee may direct his/her comments to a coach through a team captain.

**6. Referee Notification and Send-Off Report** - Should a referee eject any player, coach, or sideline spectator, and/or abandon a game, he/she shall notify/ file written report to the Referee Coordinator of the credentialing Club or League.

Notwithstanding the authority granted to a referee to warn or dismiss a spectator or coach, a referee is not required to warn a spectator or coach prior to dismissal from the game.

If a game is abandoned prior to completion, the referee shall make no determination as to the outcome of the match.

A written Referee Send-Off Report, outlining the pertinent facts of the sendoff and/or the abandonment of game shall be sent by the Referee to their assigning Referee Coordinator within 24 hours. Within 24 hours thereafter, the assigning Referee Coordinator shall provide the Send-Off Report to the Manager or President of the credentialing League for further action.

Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to limit the Referee's discretion as granted by Cal North (CYSA), or FIFA Laws of the Game.