

Rule 502

Discipline and Game Conduct

Updated 9/22/10

502. DISCIPLINE - GAME CONDUCT

When Discipline/Sanctions are imposed, they must meet the required minimums as specified by FYSA and/or USSF. The Disciplining body must evaluate the incident as to intent, severity and past misconduct to determine the appropriate disciplines/sanctions. More severe disciplines/sanctions shall be imposed for multiple red cards during a season and for misconduct directed towards officials or administrators.

502.1 One Game Suspension:

1. Resulting from a second caution; (i.e., persistent infringement or dissent by word or action).
2. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area).
3. Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving toward the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.
4. Serious Foul Play is defined as using disproportionate and unnecessary strength in a manner likely to hurt or injure an opponent; any tackle from behind which endangers the safety of an opponent.

502.2 Offensive or insulting or abusive language:

1. One (1) game suspension -- Offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures not directed.
2. Three (3) game suspension -- Offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures directed toward a player, referee, assistant referee, administrator, spectator or game and /or tournament official.
3. Six (6) game suspension -- Adult directed to a youth referee.

502.3 Violent Conduct:

1. One (1) game suspension (minor infractions) -- dead-ball foul that is neither violent or with intent to harm or injure; attempting to strike, hit or punch.
2. Two (2) game suspension (minor infractions) -- is defined as the aggression of a player towards an opponent with clearly no intent to play or fight for the ball; threatening gestures.
3. Four (4) game suspension (major infractions) – striking with the intent to injure; fighting; any intentional exposure of the anatomy considered lewd and lascivious; all gestures with any part of the body which implies visual profanity.
4. Six (6) game suspension (major infraction) -- Entering a fight in progress or action resulting in law enforcement being called; entering the field of play and committing any additional offense (e.g., violent conduct, foul or abusive language; this will be in addition to the sanction for the subsequent violation).

502.4 Spitting - 4 (four) game suspension:

Spitting is defined as spitting on or at an opponent or another person as well as spitting onto their own hand prior to shaking hands with their opponent and/or the referees or other game officials.

502.5 FYSA affiliates shall notify the FYSA Office within seven (7) days of any player or coach red card/ejection for violent conduct (major infraction), foul and/or abusive language/gestures directed, spitting, or referee abuse. If the player or coach has two such ejections during a seasonal year or a third within two seasonal years, FYSA will notify the player, coach, affiliate agent of record and reporting affiliate that an additional suspension for thirteen (13) games or six (6) months, whichever is longer be applied to the end of the current suspension. Multiple offenses relating to the same red card/ejection will qualify under this rule. The action may be appealed to the FYSA Protest and Appeals Committee.

502.5.1 Any player who attempts to conceal their identity either before, during or post game, shall be suspended for a minimum of sixty (60) days or eight (8) games whichever is longer.

502.6 GAME OFFICIALS

Misconduct toward a referee may include, but it not limited to, all registered referees, assistant referees, forth officials or other duly appointed to assist. It also includes any unlicensed or unregistered person serving in an emergency capacity as a referee under USSF Policy 531, Section 2 and any club assistant referees.

Any act committed before, during, or after a match, even at later times, if it is match related, such as at work or at home may constitute misconduct toward game officials.

502.6.1 REFEREE ABUSE

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.

Abuse includes, but is not limited to, the following acts committed upon a referee; using foul or abusive language toward a referee (must imply a threat of physical harm) , spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property; spitting at (but not on) the referee; verbally threatening a referee with remarks that carry imply or direct threats of physical harm.

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 referee abuse.

Discipline: Minimum sanctions

- a. Six (6) games or three (3) month suspension, whichever is longer.
- b. Spitting at a referee or game official, six (6) games or six (6) month suspension, whichever is longer.
- c. An adult upon a youth referee, minimum of one (1) year suspension.

502.6.2 REFEREE ASSAULT

Referee assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee committed before during, or after a match, even later times if it is match related such as at work or at home. "For the purpose of this rule, "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 actions are irrelevant." Assault includes, but is not limited to, the following act committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; 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.).

The player, coach, manager, spectator or official committing the referee assault is automatically suspended as follows:

- a. For a minor or slight touching of the referee or the referee's uniform or personal property, at least six (6) months from the time of the assault;
- b. Except as provided in above, for any other assault, at least twelve (12) months from the time of the assault;
- c. For an assault committed by an adult and the referee is seventeen (17) years of age or younger, at least three (3) years; or
- d. For an assault when serious injuries are inflicted, at least five (5) years.

502.6.3. REFEREE/ASSISTANT REFEREE MISCONDUCT

502.6.3.1 Misconduct, charges or allegations shall be filed immediately with the Site Director or Official in charge of the competition. The complaint shall also be filed in writing to the Local Referee Administrator with copies addressed to the Referee Liaison and State Referee Administrator within forty-eight (48) hours of identifying the offense. Hearings may be held as specified by the SRA or his/her designees.

502.6.3.2 Failure to act by any Local, Regional or State Referee organization gives jurisdiction to FYSA to conduct hearings, discipline and/or sanction any Referee found to be in violation of FYSA Rules or for any misconduct at any FYSA sanctioned event..

502.7 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING REFEREE ABUSE AND ASSAULT

Section 1: *Procedures to be followed for any alleged incident of referee assault or abuse for any FYSA sanction club/league/Cup event.*

The referee, or a member of the referee crew (should the referee be incapacitated), will report any incident of alleged referee assault/abuse to the FYSA State Office within seventy-two (72) hours of the incident. The written report submitted must be postmarked within seventy-two (72) hours of the incident (excluding legal holidays) and must include the official game report, supplemental referee report, any other information the referee wants to submit, and the FYSA/US Youth Soccer pass of the player/coach/manager or the name of the non-player under investigation (if known). The FYSA Representative must, in turn, forward the report to the FYSA office. FYSA will in turn notify the SYRA, within 48 hours of receipt of the report.

Upon receipt at the FYSA office, a file will be opened to contain a copy of the initial report and the player/coach's pass, if applicable. The original report will then be immediately forwarded to FYSA's Review and Discipline Committee. The Review and Discipline Committee will make a determination within seven (7) days of receipt of the report as to one of the following: (i) possible referee assault did occur; (ii) possible referee abuse did occur; or (iii) documentation provided did not warrant a determination of either assault or abuse. (FYSA will inform the SYRA as to the determination of the Review and Discipline Committee.)

In the event the Review and Discipline Committee determines a possible referee assault case exists, the Committee will forward its findings to the FYSA office. ***Upon verification of an allegation of assault by FYSA, the person is automatically suspended until the hearing is held on the assault.*** FYSA will immediately notify the applicable RVP with the direction to schedule a hearing on the matter within thirty (30) days. Any delay in scheduling the hearing within the thirty (30) day timeframe must be approved by the chairperson of the FYSA Review and Discipline Committee. ***Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind the automatic suspension.***

At the completion of the hearing, the RVP will forward a copy of the findings to the FYSA office and will notify the accused in writing of the findings of the hearing panel. (FYSA will inform the SYRA of the results of the hearing.) FYSA's State Office upon verification that all requirements of Section 600 have been complied with will send a copy of the decision to the FYSA Review & Discipline Committee in order that its file may be also closed

If the accused is found guilty of assault, notification will include information as to the next level of appeal, as per USSF Bylaw 705 which is directly to the Appeals Committee of the USSF.

In the event the Review and Discipline Committee determines a case of referee abuse exists, the Committee will forward its findings to the FYSA office. FYSA will immediately forward the report along with the player/coach pass, if applicable, to the appropriate RVP who will, based on the report, immediately impose sanctions of not less than a six (6) game or three (3) month suspension, whichever is longer. The RVP may impose greater sanctions for repeat offenders or if the situations warrants; however, sanctions of more than six (6) games or three (3) months will require that a hearing be held, unless waived by the accused. When sanctions are imposed, the RVP will, within seven (7) days, notify the accused and the appropriate DC in writing of said sanctions and the right of appeal of this decision to FYSA's Protest and Appeal Committee as per FYSA Rule 605 inclusive. The player/coach pass will be forwarded to the appropriate DC to hold until proper notification of games served is presented. Proper notification is accomplished by way of game reports indicating that a red card/sanction is being served. When such notification is presented, the pass will be immediately returned to the player/coach/manager.

In the event that the Review and Discipline Committee determines that neither referee assault nor abuse occurred, the Committee will notify the FYSA office of such. FYSA will immediately forward the player/coach/manager's pass to the appropriate DC who will return the pass to the appropriate club/league. If sanctions are required as a result of actions not determined to be that of referee assault or abuse, the club/league will handle these separately and according to FYSA, and/or or club/league rules.

If an allegation of referee assault/abuse occurs during a tournament under sanction of FYSA the followings actions are to be completed:

Section 2: Procedures to be followed for any alleged incident of referee assault or abuse for any FYSA Event/Tournament, not covered above

A. For players/coaches not registered to FYSA:

In the event an assault on or abuse of a referee occurs in an tournament/event outside the alleged offender's home state, or from a soccer organization not under the authority of FYSA, the referee shall (A) immediately notify the Event/Tournament Chairman, and (B) forward a copy of the game report, supplemental referee report, and his/her comments on the incident to the Event/Tournament Chairman.

The Event/Tournament Chairmen shall have the right to immediately convene a hearing at the site of the Event/Tournament, at which the alleged offender, the coach of the alleged offender when the offender is a player and the game official should be present. Information presented at this hearing shall promptly be relayed to the alleged offender's National State Association by the Event/Tournament Chairman, both orally and in writing; however failure to provide written information shall not restrict the offender's home National State Association from taking action with regard to any referee abuse or assault. The Event/Tournament Chairman shall also, within 72 hours of the incident, notify FYSA in writing, by fax, of the incident with copies of all game reports, supplemental reports, and findings as to any hearing held at the Event/Tournament. (FYSA will copy the SYRA on all reports concerning this incident.)

B. For players/coaches registered to FYSA:

For players/coaches under FYSA's jurisdiction, the Event/Tournament will retain the player/coach pass to be forwarded to the FYSA State Office, along with copies of all game reports, supplemental reports, and any other information concerning this incident, within 24 hours of the completion of the Tournament/Event. The review process of the incident will

then follow the procedures as outline in Section 1 above.

502.8 ABUSE AND/OR ASSAULT UPON NON-GAME OFFICIALS

Abuse and/or assault upon any affiliate member, league/tournament official, FYSA state staff, FYSA board member/official or any other person acting in an official capacity at any FYSA-sanctioned event.

Abuse shall be defined as under Rule 502.6.1.

Assault shall be defined as under Rule 502.6.2.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABUSE AND ASSAULT

Section 1: *Procedures to be followed for any alleged incident of assault or abuse for any FYSA sanction club/league/Cup event.*

The official, or event director, will report any incident of alleged assault/abuse to FYSA, or its designee, (i.e., DC; RVP) within seventy-two (72) hours of the incident. The written report submitted must be postmarked within seventy-two (72) hours of the incident (excluding legal holidays) and must include the official game report, supplemental reports, any other information the parties want to submit, and the FYSA/US Youth Soccer pass of the player/coach/manager or the name of the non-player under investigation (if known). The FYSA Representative must, in turn, forward the report to the FYSA office.

Upon receipt at the FYSA office, a file will be opened to contain a copy of the initial report and the player/coach's pass, if applicable. The original report will then be immediately forwarded to FYSA's Review and Discipline Committee. The Review and Discipline Committee will make a determination within seven (7) days of receipt of the report as to one of the following: (i) possible assault did occur; (ii) possible abuse did occur; or (iii) documentation provided did not warrant a determination of either assault or abuse.

In the event the Review and Discipline Committee determines a possible assault case exists, the Committee will forward its findings to the FYSA office. ***Upon verification of an allegation of assault by FYSA, the person is automatically suspended until the hearing is held on the assault.*** FYSA will immediately notify the applicable RVP with the direction to schedule a hearing on the matter within thirty (30) days. Any delay in scheduling the hearing within the thirty (30) day timeframe must be approved by the chairperson of the FYSA Review and Discipline Committee. ***Failure to hold the initial hearing shall not rescind the automatic suspension.***

At the completion of the hearing, the RVP will forward a copy of the findings to the FYSA office and will notify the accused in writing of the findings of the hearing panel.

In the event the Review and Discipline Committee determines a case of official abuse exists, the Committee will forward its findings to the FYSA office. FYSA will immediately forward the report along with the player/coach pass, if applicable, to the appropriate RVP who will, based on the report, immediately impose sanctions of not less than a six (6) or three (3) month game

suspension, whichever is longer. The RVP may impose greater sanctions for repeat offenders or if the situations warrants; however, sanctions of more than six (6) games or three (3) months will require that a hearing be held, unless waived by the accused. When sanctions are imposed, the RVP will, within seven (7) days, notify the accused and the appropriate DC in writing of said sanctions and the right of appeal of this decision to FYSA's Protest and Appeal Committee as per FYSA Rule 605, inclusive. The player/coach pass will be forwarded to the appropriate DC to hold until proper notification of games served is presented. Proper notification is accomplished by way of game reports indicating that a red card/sanction is being served. When such notification is presented, the pass will be immediately returned to the player/coach/manager.

In the event that the Review and Discipline Committee determines that neither official assault nor abuse occurred, the Committee will notify the FYSA office of such. FYSA will immediately forward the player/coach/manager's pass to the appropriate DC who will return the pass to the appropriate club/league. If sanctions are required as a result of actions not determined to be that of official assault or abuse, the club/league will handle these separately and according to FYSA, and/or or club/league rules.

If an allegation of official assault/abuse occurs during a tournament under sanction of FYSA the followings actions are to be completed:

Section 2: Procedures to be followed for any alleged incident of official assault or abuse for any FYSA Event/Tournament, not covered above

A. For players/coaches not registered to FYSA:

In the event an assault on or abuse of a official occurs in an tournament/event outside the alleged offender's home state, or from a soccer organization not under the authority of FYSA, the official shall (A) immediately notify the Event/Tournament Chairman, and (B) forward a copy of the game report, supplemental reports, and his/her comments on the incident to the Event/Tournament Chairman.

The Event/Tournament Chairmen shall have the right to immediately convene a hearing at the site of the Event/Tournament, at which the alleged offender, the coach of the alleged offender when the offender is a player and the game official should be present. Information presented at this hearing shall promptly be relayed to the alleged offender's National State Association by the Event/Tournament Chairman, both orally and in writing; however failure to provide written information shall not restrict the offender's home National State Association from taking action with regard to any official abuse or assault. The Event/Tournament Chairman shall also, within 48 hours of the incident, notify FYSA in writing, by fax, of the incident with copies of all game reports, supplemental reports, and findings as to any hearing held at the Event/Tournament.

B. For players/coaches registered to FYSA:

For players/coaches under FYSA's jurisdiction, the Event/Tournament will retain the player/coach pass to be forwarded to the FYSA State Office, along with copies of all game reports, supplemental reports, and any other information concerning this incident, within 24 hours of the completion of the Tournament/Event. The review process of the incident will then follow the procedures as outline in Section 1 above.