



Soccer Maine Referee Abuse Policy **(formerly known as the Zero Tolerance Policy)**

Applicability

Each coach is responsible for his/her actions, the actions of his/her players and bench personnel. Each coach, player, and spectator shall at all times support the referee and assistant referees. Failure to do so will undermine the referee's authority, and has the potential of creating a hostile environment for the players, spectators, coaches, and referees alike. No one is to address the referee in a negative manner during or after the game.

Coaches' communications with the referee and assistant referees

Coaches and/or bench personnel 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.

Violations of this policy during a game will have the below consequences:

- First infraction: Referee may stop the game and remind the coach or bench personnel of Soccer Maine's Referee Abuse Policy (formerly named Zero Tolerance Policy).
- Second infraction: Caution. (*No yellow card shall be shown to any coach or bench personnel*). The referee may issue a final warning that a third infraction may result in an ejection.
- Third infraction: Ejection. (*No red card shall be shown to any coach or bench personnel*). The referee may instruct the coach or bench personnel 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.

Nothing in this rule may be construed to limit the referee's discretion as granted by FIFA Laws of the Game.

Spectator communications with the referee and assistant referees

Negative or critical comments directed to any member of the referee crew will not be tolerated.

- First infraction: Referee may stop the game, request the assistance of both coaches, and remind the spectator of Soccer Maine's Referee Abuse policy (formerly known as the Zero Tolerance Policy).
- Second infraction: Referee may stop the game and issue a final warning that a third infraction may result in an ejection and ejection of the coach in charge of the spectator(s).
- Third infraction: The referee may instruct the coaches to direct the spectator to leave the field and may eject the responsible coach for failing to control the spectator(s). If the ejected coach and the spectator(s) fail to leave the area of the field, the referee may abandon the game.

Nothing in this rule may be construed to limit the referee's discretion as granted by FIFA Laws of the Game.

Notification

Should a referee eject any player, coach, bench personnel or spectator, and/or abandon a game, he/she shall notify Soccer Maine in writing. A written report of the pertinent facts should be sent to the Soccer Maine office within 24 hours. ***If a game is abandoned prior to completion, the referee will make no determination as to the outcome of the match.*** Soccer Maine may refer the matter to its disciplinary committee for further action, if necessary, and/or to the appropriate competition committee for disposition of an abandoned game.

Soccer Maine will not tolerate any abuse of referees, assistant referees, or fourth officials from coaches, players, other team staff, or spectators. This policy ensures that referees and assistant referees can officiate games in a safe, non-threatening environment and will not be subjected to any critical, disparaging, or otherwise abusive remarks. Soccer Maine expects all clubs, coaches, and players to assist in maintaining the highest standards in sportsmanship and personal conduct.