



POLICY ON SIDELINE BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT DURING A MATCH

During all matches, at any age group or competition level sanctioned by Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer, it is expected that all participants adhere to Eastern Pennsylvania's bylaws, policies, and published codes of conduct. Further, they will abide by the policies and bylaws of FIFA, US Soccer, US Youth Soccer, and any sanctioned competition's prescribed rules and standards. All players, coaches, referees, and spectators/parents shall fall under the same scrutiny for their conduct.

Leagues, clubs, teams, and spectators should all endeavor to be positive examples of sportsmanship and fair play. Players deserve to play in a safe and supportive environment. Clubs are generally held responsible for their members and their spectators' conduct. The head coach will be directly responsible for the conduct of the team and spectators at any match.

Only rostered players, coaches, or administrators with all required clearances, can be in the designated technical area/team area (i.e., the bench). Spectator areas must remain separated from the bench area. Member leagues may establish additional rules on team and spectator location designation and general conduct.

The Laws of The Game establish that the referee has control over the match. The referee can warn or discipline players and coaches due to their conduct. It may be a verbal warning, a caution (yellow card) or a send-off (red card). If spectators are displaying inappropriate conduct, such as foul or abusive language towards players or the game officials, or to each other in a manner disruptive to the game, the referee will stop the match and address the appropriate head coach, or both head coaches, if necessary, especially if the disruptive person(s) are not identifiable. The referee shall not directly address the spectators. The referee will direct the coach to intervene and resolve any spectator issue before the match continues. The head coach may designate an assistant coach or team manager to speak to the offending spectator(s). However, the head coach ultimately remains responsible, and should the offending behavior continue or escalate, the referee may show a yellow card to the coach. Subsequent violations can result in a dismissal (red card) of the coach or termination of the match. If there is no additional rostered coach or manager available, the match will be terminated.

To be clear, negative behavior and misconduct can happen before a match, during a match, halftime or after the match ends. The referee still has control. Players, coaches and spectators must always respect the referee's personal space.

These matters must be addressed in the referee's match report and submitted to the league or competition director. Discipline shall be administered by the league or competition. Acts of referee abuse and/or assault will be reported directly to the State Association and disciplinary hearings will be held. Disciplinary actions for sideline behavior may extend beyond the individual(s) and be applied to their club.