



## REFEREEING

### REFEREE LICENSES

- Grassroots (formerly grades 9 to 7)
- Regional (formerly graded 6 to 5)
- National (formerly grades 3 to 4)
- National Emeritus (formerly grade 13)
- Regional Emeritus (formerly grade 15)
- PRO
- FIFA
- Referee Mentor
- Referee Coach
- National Referee Coach

### ADDITIONAL LICENSES

- Indoor
- Beach

### REFEREE COACH PATHWAY

### FUTSAL LICENSES

- Grassroots Futsal
- Regional Futsal
- FIFA Futsal

The State Referee Administrator and State Youth Referee Administrator are responsible for developing a referee network that meets the needs of the State Referee Association.

Registration begins on July 1 and remains open until June 30. For example, the 2023 registration year began on July 1, 2022 and ends June 30, 2023. For current requirements, review the [Referee Certification Requirements](#).

### OFFICIAL U.S. SOCCER REFEREE UNIFORM

Official Sports International (OSI) is the official technical partner of U.S. Soccer.

Only manufacturer's logos and U.S. Soccer approved badges and/or emblems may be on the uniform.

### REFEREE HEALTH AND SAFETY

As part of U.S. Soccer's commitment to health and safety, our medical and referee experts have prepared the following recommendations for the referee community and incorporated them into our referee education materials.

In the interest of health and safety, U.S. Soccer recommends that match officials practice the following skin care guidelines:

- Wear sunscreen daily on areas of exposed skin.
- Apply skin protection factor (SPF) of 30 or greater, 15 minutes prior to being exposed to the sun.
- At a minimum, reapply every 2 hours or more frequently if sweating extensively.
- Take advantage of halftime to reapply.
- Consider wearing long sleeves (or UV protective clothing) if applicable during high sun exposure periods.
- Periodically (once a year) review exposed skin for any changes or growths and consult your doctor or dermatologist.
- Caps may be worn so long as the cap does not endanger the safety of the official or the players.
- The cap should be consistent with the referee uniform and not conflict with the uniform colors worn by either team.
- The cap may not bear any commercial marks or logos.

## DIAGNOL SYSTEM OF CONTROL

The diagonal system of control (DGS) consists of one referee and two assistant referees. All competitions sanctioned by the U.S. Soccer Federation require the use of this officiating system and certain competitions may require the use of a fourth official.

In order to comply with the Laws of the Game all sanctioned directly or indirectly by member organizations of the U.S. Soccer Federation must employ the diagonal system of control and be assigned according to the following order of preference:

- One registered referee and two registered assistant referees
- One registered referee, one registered assistant referee and one unregistered club linesperson\*
- One registered referee and two unregistered club linespersons\*
- One registered referee only if no unregistered club linespersons are available or if one registered referee is appropriate for the level of competition

\* Club linespersons are only allowed to signal for the ball in and out of play. The preference should always be given to unregistered club linespersons who have no affiliation to the participating teams.

## REPORTS

The completion and submission of report is an important duty of an official. If required by the competition, the [U.S. Soccer Referee Report](#) can be used to submit standard game information. Review [Cautionable and Sending-Off Offenses](#).

If needed, and in addition to the U.S. Soccer Referee Report, the [U.S. Soccer Supplemental Referee Report](#) can be used for instances of referee assault, referee abuse, dismissal of team officials, sending-off offenses, serious injuries, game abandonment or other substantial occurrences.

Some competitions may provide individualized game, misconduct and supplemental reports.

In addition to the U.S. Soccer Federation Policy 531-9, officials should consider the following when submitting a U.S. Soccer Supplemental Referee Report related to instances of referee assault or referee abuse:

- Complete a U.S. Soccer Referee Report to record the basic game data
- Provide a clear, concise and factual account of what happened
- Include all relevant information to identify the persons involved
- Do not give opinions or recommendations
- Confirm the details in the report with all other officials
- File the report within 48 hours of the incident
- Retain a copy of all reports for future reference
- Multiple incidents may require the use of multiple supplemental reports

At minimum, supplemental reports related to referee assault or referee abuse should be sent to the following:

- Competition authorities (e.g. local league, tournament director, cup coordinator, etc.)
- State President with jurisdiction for the competition
- State Referee Administrator

After submitting reports related to misconduct, assault or abuse, an official should acknowledge all correspondences related to the report and advise any authorized panel of availability to attend a disciplinary hearing if requested. If requested to participate in a disciplinary hearing, either in person or by phone, an official should cooperate fully throughout the proceedings.

## AFFILIATED AND UNAFFILIATED COMPETITIONS

Registered and certified officials have the responsibility to officiate games among youth, adult, and professional teams which are affiliated with the U.S. Soccer Federation so that affiliated teams do not have a shortage of qualified officials for their competitions.

Unaffiliated competition refers to teams and leagues that meet any of the following criteria in relation to the U.S. Soccer Federation:

- Have never been affiliated with
- Suspended by
- In bad standing with
- Left voluntarily (while in good standing at the time of departure)

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In addition to the U.S. Soccer Federation Policies 531-1 and 531-6, officials should take steps to prevent any appearance of a conflict of interest.

An active official may serve on the administrative committees or board of competition or State Association (except as restricted by U.S. Soccer Federation Policy 531-1). An active official may officiate in a competition or State Association while also being a member but should adhere to the following:

- Disqualify themselves from participating in any disciplinary proceeding in which the subject is a team, player or other person where there is vested interest
- Disqualify themselves from participating in any disciplinary proceeding involving a game where they served as a game official
- Not officiate in any match where there is vested interest

“Vested interest” is defined as when the official or a member of the official’s family (spouse, child or parent) or that person’s team may be affected by the outcome of the proceeding or match.

## VANISHING SPRAY

The use of vanishing spray is prohibited by officials unless approval for use during an affiliated competition is given by U.S. Soccer.

Requests should be made by the appropriate affiliated competition authorities and these will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis provided the following minimum requirements are met:

- The affiliated competition must provide the vanishing spray at no cost to the officials
- The affiliated competition must provide the officials with training on how to use the vanishing spray and monitor its use throughout the competition
- The affiliated competition (or associated league of Organizational Member) must assume all liability associated with the use of the vanishing spray

- When approved, competitions should make best efforts to use the vanishing spray in all competitive matches and officials should make every reasonable effort to ensure the spray is used consistently during their match