

U S S O C C E R N A T I O N A L A P P E A L S C O M M I T T E E

R E F E R E E A S S A U L T A N D
A B U S E

M I S C O N D U C T T O W A R D G A M E
O F F I C I A L S

P O L I C Y 531-9

AUTHORITY

- **1.** USSF Policy 531-9 Misconduct toward game officials.
 - a.** This rule supersedes all rules of the SA
 - b.** Nothing in this rule shall limit any restrictions on anyone not covered under this rule

WHEN MAY MISCONDUCT OCCUR

- **1. THE MATCH**
 - Before
 - During
 - After
- **2. OR LATER**
 - If directly related to duties of a game official as a referee.

WHO IS COVERED

***1. All USSF Registered:**

- a. Referees
- b. Assistant Referees
- c. Fourth Officials

***2. Any other appointed match officials**

***3. Any club assistant referee**

***4. Any non-registered person serving as a referee under Policy 531-9**

WHAT IS ASSAULT ?

“An intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee.”

ASSAULT INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- Hitting, Punching, or Choking
- Spitting on
- Grabbing
- Bodily running into
- Kicking or throwing at
- Damaging uniform
- Damaging personal property

WHAT IS ABUSE ?

“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:

- Foul Language
- Abusive Language
- Spewing any beverage
- Spitting at (but not on)
- Verbal Threats

VERBAL THREATS

- Remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm.
- “I’ll get you after the game.”
- “You won't get out of here in one piece.”

J U R I S D I C T I O N

- *Who can be charged?*

Any player, coach, manager, club official or game official

- *What are the responsibilities of the S.A?*

To verify and to hold a hearing within 30 days

R E P O R T I N G

- As developed by the US Soccer Referee Committee.
 - Reports to the SA from the referee within forty-eight(48) hours
 - For Tournaments/ Events, the day of the incident to event director and within ten(10) days to the home state association of the defendant.

The following are sample
notice letters for cases of
Assault and/or Abuse

ASSAULT

Dear _____:

You have been charged with referee assault under USSF Policy 531-9 and SA Rule 7. Per USSF Policy 531-9 you are suspended from all activities of the SA and the USSF pending a hearing on the charges against you.

This hearing must be held within thirty(30) days from today or you have the right to have the matter heard by the US Soccer Appeals Committee.

Copies of the charges against you, all possible penalties, the referee reports and all applicable rules and procedures enclosed.

You will be notified of the hearing date within _____() days.

If you have any questions, Please contact the SA office at

ABUSE

Dear _____:

You have been charged with referee abuse under USSF Policy 531-9 and SA Rule 7.

Per USSF Policy 531-9 you are entitled to a hearing on the charges against you. This hearing must be held within thirty(30) days from today or you have the right to have the matter heard by the US Soccer Appeals Committee.

Copies of the charges against you, all possible penalties, the referee reports and all applicable rules and procedures are enclosed.

You will be notified of the hearing date within () days.

If you have any questions, please contact the SA office at

HEARINGS / GENERAL

- **1.** Must be held within 30 days of verification of the abuse or assault by the State Association.
- **2.** If not held within 30 days, jurisdiction may be taken by USSF Appeals Committee.
- **3.** Must be heard by at least 3 neutral persons.

A S S A U L T H E A R I N G S

- **A.** Alleged assault offender is automatically suspended until his/her hearing.
- **B.** Failure to hold an initial hearing within 30 days shall not rescind the automatic suspension.
- **C.** Due process requires that the alleged offender is given their hearing as quickly as possible

ABUSE HEARINGS

- **A.** Hearing is held when requested by the alleged offender or otherwise deemed appropriate by the convening authority.
 - Hearing is probably always “appropriate”
- **B.** The alleged offender must be made aware of their rights and of any possible penalties that they may be subject to.

P E N A L T I E S / A S S A U L T

- **1.** The player, coach, manager, or official committing referee assault is automatically suspended as followed:
- **A.** Minimum 3 months for minor or slight touching
- **B.** Minimum 6 months for other assault, except as follows
- **C.** 5 Year minimum with serious injury
- **D.** 3 Year minimum adult defendant with a minor referee.(17 years of age or under)
 - If minor or slight touching, 3 month minimum applies
- **E.** If circumstances warrant longer suspensions may be imposed.

P E N A L T I E S / A B U S E

- The player, coach, manager, or official committing referee abuse is automatically suspended as follows.
- **A.** 3 match minimum
- **B.** If circumstances warrant longer suspensions may be imposed.
 - Repeat Offenders

APPEALS / ASSAULT

- Appeals are directed to the USSF Appeals Committee.
- Filed within 10 days from receipt of written decision.

A P P E A L S / A B U S E

- Follows the procedures of:
- The State Association and/ or the USSF

WHAT TO WATCH FOR AND KEEP WATCHING FOR

- Due process.
- Accurate reports of match officials.
- Copies of all reports to the offender.
- Keep emotions out of record.
- Supply USSF appeal procedure.
- Send reports to the State Association of offender.
- Keep penalties within the rules.
- Protect the rights of the referee & the alleged offender.
- With assault, the alleged offender is under suspension during the hearing process.