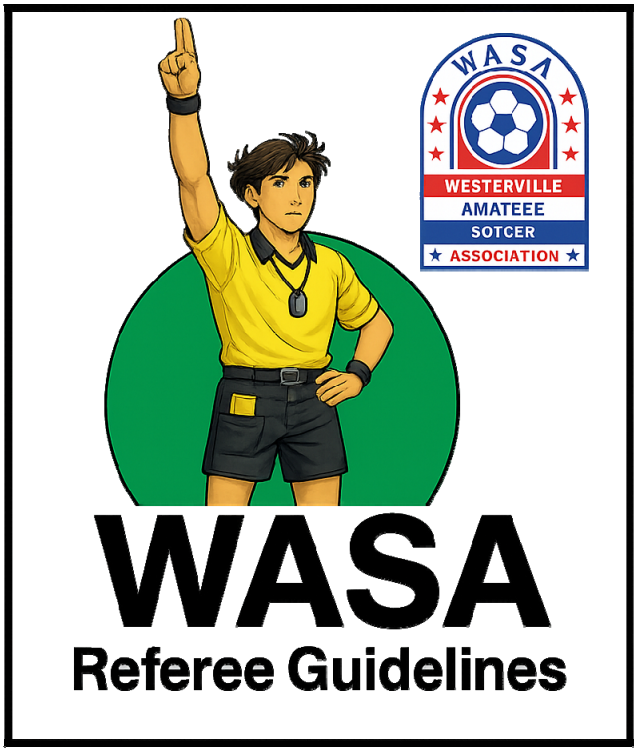

The information in these guidelines should not be construed as a replacement for rules issued by FIFA, USSF, or the various soccer organizations under which WASA operates.

The information is intended as a procedural reference for WASA's two-referee system.

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Rules for WASA Referees

1. **Required Referee Uniform**
   - Gold referee shirt with WASA badge *(or alternate color - black, red, blue, or green)*
   - Black shorts
   - Black stockings with white stripe(s)
   - Black shoes (preferred) – No sandals/crocs

   Required Referee Equipment
   - Whistle
   - Wristwatch or stopwatch with countdown timer- **No Phones** *(time keeping device must show seconds)*
   - Coin
   - Yellow & red cards (not used in U6 & U7)
   - Game Record to record events during the game *(Available on the WASA website)*
   - Pen or pencil

2. **Cell Phones are not permitted during games** (*This includes ALL communication and/or entertainment devices.)*

   Timekeeping should be done with a wristwatch or a stopwatch, NOT with your cell phone.

   Your job is to referee. Anything that distracts you from that responsibility cheats both the players and the people who pay you. Use of these devices during a game may result in you being sent home.

   Texting, talking, message checking, browsing, listening to music, etc. while you referee a soccer game is **not permitted**.

   If someone calls you during a game, ignore the call. If you do not have the ability to ignore your communications device, turn it off or leave it on the sideline.

3. **Be at the field at least 15 minutes before the scheduled game time. Start the game on time.**

4. **Required for every game you referee...**

   Use a Game Record to document the game as it is played.

   Obtain coaches' signatures at the end of each game**.**

   When you get home, enter the game(s) on your Referee Work Record (RWR).

5. **Know the Laws of the Game (LOTG)**

   You need to know the LOTG and correctly apply them to what you see on the field. If there is something you are not sure about, don't just let it go. Have the professional integrity to learn the correct call. Do some research online or ask one of the senior WASA referees.

6. **Cooperate with coaches to help players learn the game.**

   WASA is an instructional league. Calling fouls is part of the instruction process. Briefly and loudly tell players what foul you have called and what you want them to do. Explain as much as necessary to help the player understand what they did wrong and how to do it correctly.

   If there is an arm signal associated with your call, **USE IT**. This helps the coaches know what will happen next.

   Young players often do not understand soccer terminology. They may not understand what to do when you say, "It's a goal kick (free kick, corner kick, throw-in, etc.)." If they don't respond correctly to your first verbal direction take your direction up a notch, point to the exact spot where they are to place the ball and tell them exactly what to do next.

7. **WASA Referees do not have the authority to issue or even mention a forfeit.**

   If a team does not show up for a game, if a coach pulls his team from the field due to player safety concerns or if some other unusual event occurs, the referee **Does Not** have the authority to declare a forfeit. Please do not even mention the possibility of a forfeit to players, coaches or parents.

   The referee can only report to the referee coordinator that the game was not played or not completed and give the reason(s) why. **The division coordinator will determine the status of the game**.

Player, Coach, and Spectator Rules That You Need to Know

1. **Coaches in all divisions except U5 must stay off the field.**

2. **Players and Coaches on the team sideline should not interfere with play.**

   The bench should be at least 5 feet from the touchline. This gives players room to make throw-ins and the referee room to move up and down the sideline.

   Coaches should be no closer to the goal line than the penalty area line that is parallel to the goal line.

   Players waiting to go in as a sub should be ready and standing at the mid-field flag/line.

   Players not waiting to sub in should stay more than 5 yards away from the mid-field flag/line.

3. **Spectators should be on the opposite side of the field from the teams.**

   Spectators should stay at least 5 feet from the touchline so players have room to make kick-ins/throw-ins and the referee has room to move up and down the sideline.

4. **Coaches and spectators are not permitted to provide instruction to players from behind the goals.**

   Do not enforce this in U6 and U7 games. Sometimes the goal line for one mini-field is near the sideline of another field.

   Photographers and other spectators are permitted behind the goals as long as they do not distract the players or interfere with the game. Providing direction to players is considered to be a distraction.

5. **Coaches are not authorized to cancel games. That decision belongs to WASA staff and the referees.**

   If the referee decides to play, and a coach feels that weather or field conditions threaten the safety of the teams' players, the coach should inform the referee of the concern and pull his/her team from the field.

   If a referee(s) terminates a game and the coaches ignore the referee's decision, the referees should immediately leave the field and report the incident to the referee coordinator.

Player Equipment

****All players must have safe equipment****

1. Shin guards are required for all practices and games.

2. Tennis shoes, running shoes, cleats approved for soccer may be worn. Baseball and football cleats are NOT permitted nor are sandals or crocs.

3. Hair restraints must be soft fabric or elastic. Hair restraints containing metal or hard plastic are not permitted.

4. ***Jewelry is not permitted***… no rings, bracelets, watches, necklaces, earrings, or any type of piercing. FIFA rules do not permit soccer players to wear earrings. Contact with the ear could cause the back of the earring to puncture the skin behind the ear or tear an earlobe. A shirt or finger might catch the earring and pull it out. Covering earrings with tape or band-aids is NOT PERMITTED as an alternative.

Earrings, Jewelry, Hair Beads and Religious/Medical-Alert Items

As stated in FIFAs Laws of the Game, earrings and other jewelry are not permitted. FIFA is soccer's world-wide governing body. Except as noted below, earrings and other jewelry are not permitted. Players choosing to not remove earrings or other prohibited jewelry cannot participate in play.

US Youth Soccer, the national governing body of youth soccer, joins FIFA in explicitly prohibiting jewelry in its laws of the game. This includes bracelets, earrings, hair barrettes/beads/pins, necklaces, rings, watches, etc. Recognizing that WASA is a youth recreational league and to enhance access to the league, these laws are modified to allow soft elastic hair ties (i.e., scrunchies), and hair beads or religious or medical-alert items that are covered and/or contained with a soft material, and appropriately secured.

The referees have the final determination on whether the covered/secured item is determined safe for play.

There is no exception for recently pierced ears. FIFA as well as US Soccer and the Ohio Soccer Association have issued a directive to referees that tape and/or band-aids over earrings or pierced-ear starter plugs are not permitted under any circumstances. Parental consent is irrelevant. Referees will not allow a player to play with earrings or other prohibited jewelry. Any player who is considering having their ears pierced is advised to wait until the season is over.

What to Do If You Need a Replacement

Make an effort to find your own replacement. *(WASA provides a list of active referees at the beginning of each season)*

It is your responsibility to find a replacement when you are unable to referee an assigned game. If you know someone who is available to take your place, make arrangements directly with them. Make certain that your replacement knows which games they are covering for you. Also, notify the Referee Schedule Supervisor Diana Tisdale which referee is replacing you.

If you cannot find a substitute on your own, contact Diana Tisdale at least 24 hours before the scheduled game times. If it is a Game Day Emergency, text Diana no later than 4PM weekdays and 7AM Saturdays using the Replacement Referee System.

email: rrs@wasasoccer.org or Phone/Text Diana Tisdale at (419) 889 1909

What to Do If the Other Referee Is Not There by 10 Minutes Before the Game

Presume that your partner is not going to show up.

Do not wait. Immediately tell the coaches that there will be only one referee.

Ask each of them to supply a club linesperson. (U8 or higher)

(Club linespeople are not necessary for U6 and U7 games. You will referee ALONE.)

Do not start the game until you have two club linesperson.

Do the pre-game duties as quickly as possible.

1. Inspect the players' equipment
2. Flip the coin
3. Instruct each club linesperson about what you want them to do. *(See the notes about club linesperson below)*
4. Get the game ball from the home team
5. Start the game on time

Notes about club linesperson:

1. Usually, a club linesperson is a parent, brother, sister or friend of someone on one of the two teams. They are usually not trained as referees. **Do not assume that they will be impartial.**
2. Show them where they should be positioned on the sideline and how far up and down the sideline they should go.
3. Ask them to indicate with a raised arm when the ball completely crosses the sideline and which direction the throw-in will go.
4. Tell them that you reserve the right to change their calls about which team gets the ball.
5. If you do not have a clear view, a club linesperson may also be able to help you determine who last touched the ball before it went over the goal line.
6. Make offside calls yourself. **Do not let a club linesperson make or help with offside calls.**
7. **At the end of the game before obtaining coaches' signatures, thank each club linesperson for their help. This is very important!**

Weather Procedures

Go to the field.

Go to the field unless you have been notified by the Referee Coordinator that your specific games are cancelled.

Game and field status information can also be found on the WASA home page: **www.wasasoccer.org**.

Determine if weather conditions are acceptable to play.

Rain:

Heavy showers are NOT sufficient reason to cancel a WASA game. Referees may delay the start of a game, or take a rain delay during a game, for up to 15 minutes. If after 15 minutes the heavy showers persist, cancel or terminate the game. (If a match is cancelled or terminated, notify the Referee Coordinator.)

If there is a rain delay, adjust the game length so the game ends at the original ending time.

Thunder and Lightning:

If there is no thunder or lightning, every effort should be made to play the game.

If there is thunder or lightning – **Immediately cancel or terminate the game.** (If a match is cancelled or terminated, notify the Referee Coordinator.)

WASA Policy regarding Thunder and Lightning

If **anyone** hears thunder or spots lightning during a game… **Do not continue play!**

Take immediate action.

- In WASA Rec. matches for ages U12 and below…
  Terminate the match. Advise everyone to seek shelter.

Seek shelter for yourself. **If safe shelter is not available, GO HOME for that match but return for the following match**.

- In Middle School age matches or above…
  There must be a full 30 minute delay. Advise everyone to seek shelter.
  Each subsequent occurrence of thunder or lightning restarts the 30 minute clock.
  If after 30 minutes it is apparent that conditions are not improving, terminate the match.

NOTE: Canceling one game does not automatically cancel games that follow. Referees should return to the field and make a separate decision at the scheduled time for the next game. Referees get paid for both games even if they are not played.

Determine if field conditions are acceptable to play.

The safety of the players is the most important consideration. A second consideration is the preservation of the fields for future games.

Guidelines for Judging a Field to Be Playable

- 80 percent of the field, and both goal areas, must be free of standing water and heavy mud.
- The turf should not be soggy.

If a match is cancelled or terminated, notify the Referee Coordinator.

Referee Positioning

WASA uses a two-referee system.

Both referees are considered Head Referees with equal authority to enforce the Laws of the Game.

The referee that is closest to the goal being attacked is called the **Lead Referee**.
The referee that is furthest from the goal being attacked is called the **Trail Referee**.

During normal play the two referees should be positioned where the two Assistant Referees would be in the FIFA three-man diagonal system of control. This positioning provides the best opportunity to see fouls, determine offside position, see when the ball leaves the field and judge if a goal is scored.

Second to Last Defender
(U6/U7 - Last Defending Player)

Lead referee:

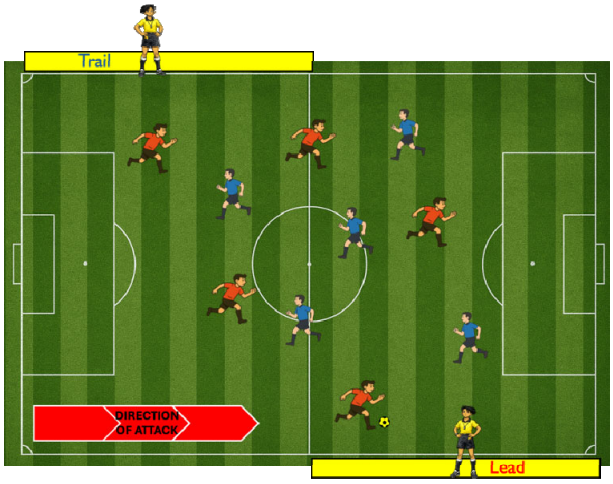
Positioned even with the second to last defender in the end of the field being attacked, or even with the ball, if the ball is closer to the goal line.

Trail referee:

Positioned even with the second to last defender in the end of the field farthest from the goal being attacked.

For games in U10 and under, if play goes deep into the attacking end, the Trail referee may move up to the mid-line… but no further.

If the direction of play changes, the Trail referee becomes the Lead referee and must quickly get into position even with the second to last defender, or the ball, as described above for the lead referee.



Referees should not go past the halfway line into the other end of the field.

Penalty kicks and dropped balls are exceptions to this limitation.

U6 & U7 games

There are no goal keepers in U6 & U7.

- The Lead referee is positioned even with the second to last defender in the end being attacked, or even with the ball if the ball is closer to the goal line than the last defending player.
- The Trail referee is positioned even with the second to last defender in the end of the field not being attacked.

Referee Positions when Restarting Play

Kick Off

1. Trail referee… on the centerline. Controls the kickoff. Blows whistle to signal the ball is ready for play after verifying Lead Referee is ready.
2. Lead referee… in the end of the field being attacked, even with the 2nd to last defender.

Corner Kick

1. If the kick is from the far corner, the Lead referee stands on the goal line at the corner where the goal line intersects the touch line. If the kick is from the near corner, the Lead referee is even with goal line and behind kicker.
2. After the kick is taken, the Lead referee watches to see if the kick curves out of bounds in the air before it lands in bounds.
3. The Trail referee is even with the attacking team's second to last defender, but no closer to the kick than the halfway line.

Goal Kick

1. The Trail referee sees that the ball is placed properly and then moves to a point on the sideline even with the front of the penalty area. The Trail referee ensures that opponents are outside the penalty area until the ball is kicked and clearly moves.

   For U6 & U7 games, the Trail referee is on the sideline even with the goal area.
2. The Lead referee is even with the opponent's second to last defender, but no closer to the kick than the halfway line. For U6 & U7 games, the Lead referee is on the sideline even with the halfway line.

Drop Ball

1. The Referee on the side nearest to the drop location drops the ball. The spot should be at least five yards in from the sideline. The referee faces the field (not the sideline) while dropping the ball.

2. This may require a referee to temporarily go deep into the other end of the field. After dropping the ball, this referee must quickly return to their own end of the field and take up position even with the second to last defender. This referee should continue to watch play while returning to position.
3. The other referee is in a normal position on the opposite sideline ready to move up-field or down-field with the second to last defender.
4. There are no drop balls for U6 or U7. The restart is a kick-in.

Throw-in/Kick-in

1. Both referees should be even with the second to last defenders in their respective ends of the field.
2. Additionally, the referee on the side of field where the throw-in is being taken should stand far enough away from the thrower to observe both the thrower's hands and feet. For kick-ins the referee should be even with 2nd to last defender.

Penalty Kick

For penalty kicks, the Trail referee serves as the Center Referee would in a three-man system.

1. The Trail referee position is just inside the penalty area slightly closer to the goal line than the line that is parallel to the goal line.
2. The Lead referee position is on the goal line outside the penalty area.
3. There are no Penalty Kicks in U6 or U7.

Game Day Responsibilities

Arrive at the Field - 15 Minutes before kickoff

1. Meet your partner and write their name on your score sheet.
2. Inspect the nets, field condition and markings.
3. Inspect the flags (if present) – are the correct height, correctly placed, upright, and stable so that they will not fall over during the game. Make sure the mid-field flags are at least one yard off the field.
4. Write team colors and coach names on your Game Record.

Meet with the Teams - 8 minutes before kickoff

1. Inspect Equipment:
   - Cleats and shin guards
   - Casts or braces properly padded
   - No metal or hard plastic in hair
   - Hair Beads and Medic ID/Religious jewelry effectively controlled.
   - No Jewelry of any kind: no rings, bracelets, watches, earrings, necklaces, piercings...**NO EXCEPTIONS!**
2. Get a game ball from the home team and inspect it for proper size, inflation, and condition.

Coin Toss - 5 Minutes before kickoff

1. Meet with the captains.
2. Ask who will call the coin toss for the visiting team.
3. Ask the team that wins the coin toss which end of the field they want to defend or if they want to take the kickoff.
4. If they choose to take the kickoff, the other team chooses an end of the field.
5. Record which team will kick and the direction on your Game Record.
6. Decide which side of the field each referee will take.

Take Position - 1 Minute before kickoff

1. Both referees check that their watches are set correctly and ready to operate.
2. Team-side referee… blow your whistle and get the teams on the field.
3. Both referees take position.
   - Trail referee… on the center line.
   - Lead referee… in the end of the field being attacked, even with the 2nd to last defender.
4. Both referees count the players.
5. Start the game **- on Time**

The Trail Referee controls all kickoffs

1. Make sure the ball is stationary on the center spot.
2. Make sure the Lead referee is in position and ready for the kickoff.
3. **Blow the whistle** to signify that the game may start.
4. Start your clock when the ball is kicked and clearly moves.

Time Keeping, Quarter Breaks, Halftime and End of Game

1. The referee blows the whistle when time has expired.
2. If a penalty kick needs to be taken, time is extended until the PK is complete.
3. Halftime for WASA games is five minutes.
4. Teams are **required** to switch ends for the second half.
5. In U6 and U7 games:
   - Teams alternate kickoffs. One team has the kick in the 1st and 3rd quarters. The other team in the 2nd and 4th.
   - Breaks after the 1st and 3rd quarters are two minutes.
   - Teams are **required** to switch ends for the second half. Teams **do not** switch ends after the 1st and 3rd quarters.
6. One minute before halftime is over, blow your whistle to get the teams back on the field.
7. After the game, have each coach sign your Game Record.

How to Deal with Sideline Abuse

Coach/Team Official Misbehavior:

Referees are encouraged to use the "Ask-Tell-Remove" approach used in MLS.

1. First, ask the coach/team official to please stop the behavior.

2. Next 'tell' the coach/team official their behavior is no longer going to be tolerated. For U8 and older show the coach a Yellow Card. For U6 and U7 there are no cards so contact the senior referees after the game to report the coaches' behavior.

    - Say, "Coach, your behavior is not acceptable. If you don't stop *(fill in the blank)*, I'm going to be forced to take further action. The decision is yours."
    - Always tell them, "The decision is yours." This puts the sole responsibility on the coach to manage their behavior.

3. The final step is an ejection. Show the coach/team official a Red Card.

    - Say, "Coach, your behavior leaves me no choice. You need to leave. The game will restart after you have left the field." If the coach refuses to leave, terminate the game.
    - If the coach tells you that when he leaves there will be no coach, say, "I'm sure one of the parents will volunteer. If none of them volunteer, we will have to terminate the game."

Parent/Spectator Misbehavior:

Dealing with abuse from parents is tough because technically you can't dismiss parents. **Work through the coach.**

Go to the coach and say, "Coach, you have responsibility for the conduct of your parents. We are at the point where I feel they are negatively impacting our ability to referee this game and they are affecting the players on the field. If no one deals with it, we will have to terminate the game."

Stop the game until the coach deals with the parents. Tell the coach, "I'll give you a couple minutes to go over and tell the parents to stop… *(abusing the referee, berating opponents, etc.)*."

The coach is forced to act because they know that if they do not deal with their team's parents, the game can be terminated. While the game is stopped for the coach to walk across the field, the focus is off the referee and on the coach and parents.

If the coach refuses to address the parents (or if the coach talks with the parents, but the abuse continues) you have the authority to terminate the game.

Important Note - WASA U6 through U12 Rec Games

If you Red Card a coach/team official or terminate a game, phone/text Seth Bumgarner (614-560-0081) or Alistair Harrison (614-625-3959) within 24 hours to report the specifics of the incident.