

# Zero Tolerance Policy

Rochester District Youth Soccer League

Last Updated: 2008-12-11

Because of recent and potential physical and verbal abuse in the Rochester District Youth Soccer League, the League has adopted a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY. This policy applies to all coaches, players, parents and other supporters and referees effective immediately. Abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting and other behavior (including but not limited to sarcasm, taunting, etc.) deemed detrimental to the game between the above mentioned groups will not be tolerated. Ultimate responsibility for the actions of coaches, players, and spectators resides with the member clubs.

It is the **responsibility** of the **coaches** to provide referee support and spectator control. This policy will apply to all times prior to, during and after the game at the soccer pitch and its immediate surrounding areas. It is the responsibility of the clubs to provide instructions to their coaches on how they are expected to carry out this responsibility.

**The current fees and fines listed in the Rules and Regulations of the Rochester District Youth Soccer League will be assessed in conjunction with penalties listed in the Policy.**

## **Parents and Spectators**

No parent or other spectator shall persistently address the referee or assistant referees at any time.

This includes but is not limited to:

1. Spectators shall not make derogatory comments to players of either team.
2. Spectators shall not dispute calls during or after the game.
3. Spectators shall not advise the referee to watch certain players or attend to rough play.
4. Spectators shall not yell at the referee, EVER, including criticism, sarcasm, harassment, intimidation, discriminatory comments or feedback of any kind before, during, or after the game.

The only allowable exceptions to the above are:

1. Spectators may respond to a referee who has initiated a conversation with a parent or spectator.
2. Spectators may point out an emergency or safety issues, such as a player down on the field or observed lightning.

## **Penalties**

In the opinion of the referee, depending on the severity of the offense, the referee may take either of the following actions:

1. The referee will issue a verbal warning to the coach of the offending party's team.
2. The referee will stop the game and instruct the coaches to direct the parent/spectator to leave the field. If the spectator does not leave the field, the referee should abandon the game.

## **Players**

Communications between players and referees are governed by the FIFA Laws of the Game. Penalties for violating the Laws of the Game will be governed by the Laws themselves and the Rules of the Rochester District Youth Soccer League.

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### **Coaches and Bench Personnel**

It is the responsibility of all coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and supporters in all matches. Failure to do so undermines the referee's authority and the integrity of the game, resulting in a hostile environment for players, the referee, coaches, bench personnel and spectators. As role models for all of the participants and spectators, coaches participating in a Rochester District Youth Soccer League event are expected to be supportive of, and to applaud the effort, good play, and sportsmanship on the part of ALL players from either team in a contest. By example, coaches and bench personnel are expected to show that although they are competing in a game, participants at all times have respect for the opponent, referees and spectators.

Rochester District Youth Soccer League will not tolerate negative behavior exhibited either by demonstrative actions and gestures or by ill-intentioned remarks, including those addressed toward the referees, players or coaches of an opposing team. Coaches exhibiting hostile, negative, sarcastic, or otherwise ill-intentioned behavior toward referees, opposing players or coaches will be subject to sanction by the referee and subsequent sanctions as may be imposed by the club, the coach or bench personnel represents or the League.

Coaches shall not interact directly or indirectly with the coaches or players of the opposing team during the game in any manner that may be construed as negative, hostile or sarcastic either by way of demonstrative actions and gestures or by ill-intentioned remarks. Coaches shall not offer dissent to any call made by the officials at any time.

Coaches shall not address the referee during the game except to:

1. Respond to a referee who has initiated a conversation
2. Point out emergency or safety issues
3. Make substitutions
4. Ask the referee to repeat a call (this should be infrequent)
5. Ask for the time remaining in the half (this should be infrequent).

Coaches are allowed to ask a referee after a game, in a polite and constructive way, to explain:

Law or foul but not judgment calls made in a game.

1. Polite and friendly concern can be exchanged with the referee. If the polite tone of the conversation changes, the referee may abandon the exchange at any time.
2. Absolutely no sarcasm, harassment or intimidation is allowed.

### ***Penalties***

In the opinion of the referee, depending on the severity of the offense, the referee may take either of the following actions:

1. The referee may issue a verbal warning to the offending coach or bench personnel.
2. The referee may eject the offending coach or bench personnel. The coach or bench personnel, once ejected, will be required to leave the field immediately. If the coach or bench personnel do not leave the field and any immediate adjoining area, the referee should abandon the game.

