

Reporting Language Incidents or Discriminatory Actions

GUIDANCE FOR COACHES

There is zero-tolerance for discrimination or harassment against anyone based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or physical or mental disability.

WHAT DO YOU DO...

1. YOU HEARD DEROGATORY LANGUAGE

- a. Notify the center referee.
- b. If unable to notify center referee right away, notify an assistant referee.
- c. Report the incident to the referee so that he/she can suspend the match. The game may be resumed at the referee's discretion.

2. A PLAYER REPORTS BEING SUBJECT TO DEROGATORY LANGUAGE, WHICH YOU DID NOT HEAR DIRECTLY

- a. Demonstrate support for the player and advise that you will address it immediately.
- b. Learn from the player exactly what is alleged and determine if it is a situation that warrants immediate attention. Be sure to get a description using specific language (e.g. exact words states as well as actions/language used).
 - i. If it doesn't warrant immediate attention, takes notes of the allegation so it can be reported post-game (see "Post-Game Actions")
 - ii. If it does warrant immediate attention, notify the center referee. If unable to notify center referee right away, notify an assistant referee.
- c. Report the incident to the referee so that he/she can suspend the match. The game may be resumed at the referee's discretion.

ADDRESSING THE ALLEGATION...

1. The referee will gather the coaches from both teams and at least one of the assistant referees as a witness to discuss the allegation.
2. The coach communicating the allegation explains the situation fully to the center referee and the opposing coach.
3. Describe the allegation utilizing the following:
 - a. Use exact words
 - b. Describe actions/language
 - c. Convey objective details as opposed to subjective interpretations

OUTCOMES...

1. If the allegation is heard by the referee, the referee issue a send-off per the Laws of the Game. Referees cannot issue any sanctions (send-off or cautions) unless they hear it themselves or have been told so by a member of the officiating crew on the game.
2. If the allegation is confirmed by the coaches, the coaches should immediately remove the individual(s) responsible.

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3. If the allegation is not confirmed, consideration towards resuming the competition and documenting the incident for potential future action.
3. Regardless of whether the allegation is confirmed, there should be consideration towards abandoning the match. This is ultimately the decision of the referee, based upon the safety of the environment.

POST GAME ACTION...

1. The coach should immediately inform and report the incident to his/her club representative (e.g. President).
2. The coach(es) should communicate with the parents of their respective teams. That message should be coordinated with the club representative (e.g. President).
3. The club representative should report the incident to the league/competition authority.
4. Consideration should be given to report the incident to [SafeSport](#).
5. The Referee should submit an incident report detailing the allegation and, if applicable, actions taken.

DETERMINING WHETHER AN ALLEGATION REQUIRES INTERVENTION...

Intervention is required if the derogatory language that was heard falls under one of the following categories:

- racial, religious, or national origin harassment
- sexual harassment
- emotional harassment
- gender, gender identity and sexual orientation harassment

Examples of derogatory language include, but are not limited to:

- sexually explicit statements, sexual flirtations, advances, propositions, subtle pressure for sexual activity, comments, questions, jokes, or anecdotes
- jokes, which include reference to race, religion, or national origin;
- the display or use of objects or pictures which adversely reflect on a person's race, religion, or national origin
- use of pejorative or demeaning language regarding a person's race, religion, or national origin.

**This is sourced from the New Jersey Youth Soccer's Prohibited Conduct Policy. For more details, click [here](#).*

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GUIDANCE FOR PLAYERS

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WHAT DO YOU DO...

1. YOU HAVE HEARD/SEEN DEROGATORY LANGUAGE FROM A PLAYER, COACH, SPECTATOR OR REFEREE

- a. Notify the referee or assistant referee immediately.
- b. If unable to notify your referee right away, notify your coach.

2. ANOTHER PLAYER REPORTS BEING SUBJECT TO DEROGATORY LANGUAGE, WHICH YOU DID NOT HEAR DIRECTLY

- a. Notify the referee or assistant referee immediately.
- b. If unable to notify the referee right away, notify your coach.

ADDRESSING THE ALLEGATION...

DESCRIBE USING SPECIFIC LANGUAGE. When asked about what you heard or witnessed, be sure to provide a description using complete details that you recall:

- a. Use exact words
- b. Describe actions/language
- c. Convey objective details (i.e. identify the individual) as opposed to subjective interpretations

From this point, the referees will take the necessary actions to determine next steps and potential outcomes.

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GUIDANCE FOR SPECTATORS

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WHAT DO YOU DO...

1. YOU HAVE HEARD/SEEN DEROGATORY LANGUAGE

- c. Notify your coach or Team Manager.

2. ANOTHER PLAYER REPORTS BEING SUBJECT TO DEROGATORY LANGUAGE, WHICH YOU DID NOT HEAR DIRECTLY

- c. Notify your coach or Team Manager.

ADDRESSING THE ALLEGATION...

DESCRIBE USING SPECIFIC LANGUAGE. When asked about what you heard or witnessed, be sure to provide a description using complete details that you recall:

- d. Use exact words
- e. Describe actions/language
- f. Convey objective details as opposed to subjective interpretations

From this point, the coach will notify the officials. The officials will then suspend the game immediately and follow their established process.