



# HYS REFEREE TRAINING

IN-TOWN – Spring 2026



# AGENDA



## 1. Introduction

- i. Welcome
- ii. Goals and Purpose
- iii. Importance

## 2. Understanding the Laws

- i. Basic Overview
- ii. Modifications
- iii. Fair Play & Sportsmanship

## 3. Positioning & Mechanics

- i. Proper Position
- ii. Signal Mechanics

## 4. Communication

- i. Communicating w/ Players, Coaches and Parents
- ii. Maintaining Authority & Dealing with Conflicts

## 5. Materials

- i. Uniforms
- ii. Equipment – Whistle, Flags, Scorecard, Cards, Timer

## 6. Practical Application

- i. Field Session

## 7. Conclusions & Resources

- i. Recap
- ii. Resources
- iii. Ongoing Education
- iv. Thank-You

# WELCOME

Refereeing is a vital part of the game, ensuring that every match is played fairly, safely, and according to the rules.

The goal of today is threefold:

- Ensure out in-town referees are comfortable with the laws and rules of the game
- Offer advice on how to best manage the referee duties and responsibilities
- Increase your confidence as a youth soccer referee



# UNDERSTANDING THE LAWS



# LAW 1: THE FIELD OF PLAY

When you get to the field it is your responsibility to make sure it is safe for all the players. Look for the following:

- Anything unsafe on the field
- Lines are clearly marked
- Nets are intact and goals secured
- Corner flags are in place
- Report anything that does not look right to Jessica



# LAW 1: THE FIELD OF PLAY



# LAW 2: THE BALL

Make sure the ball is fully inflated and the proper size for the age group:

- Grade 2 – size 3
- Grade 3 and 4 – size 4
- Grade 5 and 6 – size 4
- Grade 7 and above – size 5



# LAW 3: THE PLAYERS

Ensure there is the right number of players on the field.

- Grade 2 – 5 players (4 outfield players plus a goalie)
- Grade 3 and 4 – 7 players (6 outfield plus a goalie)
- Grade 5 and 6 – 9 players (8 outfield plus a goalie)
- Grade 7 and above – 11 players (10 outfield plus a goalie)

Teams can play with less players but never more.



# LAW 4: THE PLAYERS EQUIPMENT



Ensure players are safe to play soccer

- All players except the goalie should be wearing the same color jersey
- Goalie can wear any shirt of a different color or a pinnie
- Players can not wear any jewelry (medical and religious exceptions)
- Players must have shin pads (inside socks) and proper footwear (no football or baseball cleats)
- Players can not wear watches
- Hoodies must be tucked inside the jersey
- No casts of any kind can be worn



# LAW 5: THE REFEREE



This is you, set the example and players, coaches and parents will follow

- Be on time – 15-20 mins before the start of the game
- Ne presentable – shirt tucked in, soccer pulled up, ref shirt
- Be Prepared:
  - Have a pen to keep score/notes
  - Paper to write on
  - Whistle
  - Stopwatch or other way to keep time – not your phone
- Be Respectful
  - Introduce yourself to the coaches and players
  - Act like you want to be there
- Be Active
  - You are reffing the whole field, not just the center circle
  - You should be tired after the game, move around to get a better angle
  - Move from corner flag to cover flag is a good plan



# LAW 6: OTHER OFFICIALS

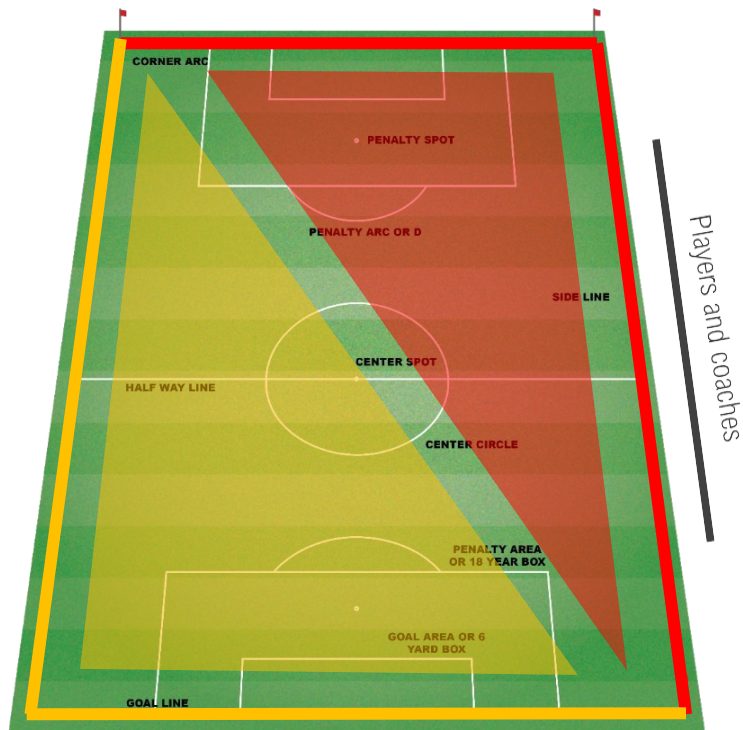


You will likely be on your own for all our in-town leagues.

Some of our in-town programs have 2 referees, both should work together however the following is a good guide to use.

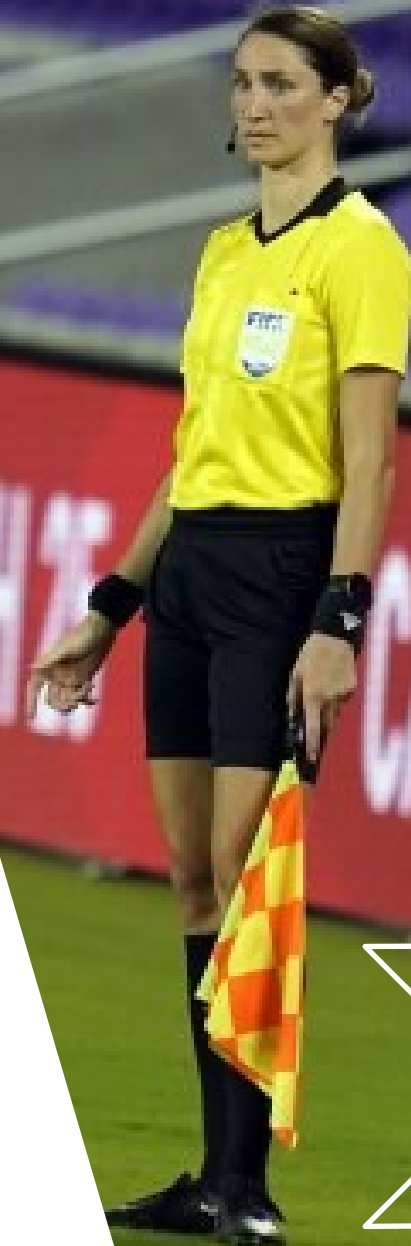
Referee 2 responsible for sideline and goal line on their half.

Referee 2 responsible for decisions in the yellow area and the time



Referee 1 responsible for sideline and goal line on their half.

Referee 1 responsible for decisions in the red area and substitutes



# LAW 7: MATCH DURATION

The match duration will vary depending on the age-group and possible depending on roster size.

- Grade 1&2 (U8) – Four 12mins quarters
- Grade 3 and 4 – Two 25mins halves
- Grade 5 and 6 – Two 30mins halves
- Grade 7 and above – Two 35min halves
  
- 2-5 mins for halftime
  
- If its very hot and both coaches agree you can split the game into quarters with a 90 second running clock water break.

Its important to keep the games running on time, we have many games, often back to back.

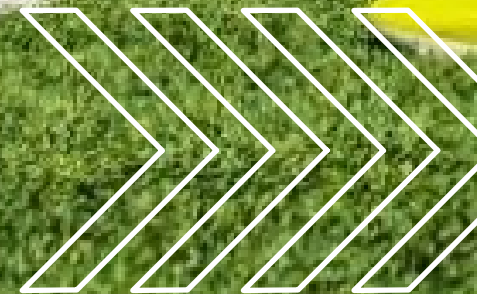


# LAW 8: START & RESTART



Your job is to communicate when the ball is in and out of play and how to restart the game if the ball goes out of play.

- Goal – if a goal is scored the defending team kicks off at the center-spot.
- Throw-In – when the ball goes out of bound on the sideline
- Goal Kick – when the attacking team kicks the ball out of bounds on the goal line
- Corner Kick - when the defending team kicks the ball out of bounds on the goal line
- Free-kick – direct or indirect – the same player can not touch the ball after it has been played.
- You should signal with your arm and state which team should have the ball. e.g. point your arm at 45 degrees up toward the attacking goal and say “yellow throw”
- Don't blow your whistle for obvious out of bounds but do blow the whistle if its close and you want to stop the game
- If the ball hits you, the referee, if it does not impact the game say “play-on” if the ball changes possession or impact the game then blow the whistle and play a drop ball

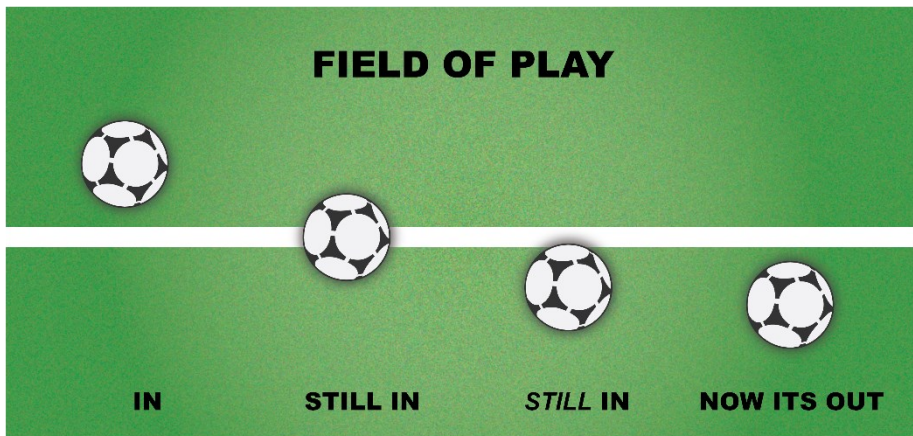


# LAW 9: BALL IN AND OUT



The ball is out of play when:

- It has wholly passed over the goal line or touchline on the ground or in the air
- play has been stopped by the referee
- it touches the referee, remains on the field of play and:
  - a team starts a promising attack or
  - the ball goes directly into the goal or
  - the team in possession of the ball changes
- In all these cases, play is restarted with a dropped ball.



# LAW 10: OUTCOME OF THE MATCH

The team with the most goals the end of the game is the winner, please send scores to the Age Group Director:

- Joseph Hall - U8- [jhall@holdenyouthsoccer.org](mailto:jhall@holdenyouthsoccer.org)
- Erin Deslauriers – Champions League – [edeslauriers@holdenyouthsoccer.org](mailto:edeslauriers@holdenyouthsoccer.org)
- Andrea Berger – W5 – [aberger@holdenyouthsoccer.org](mailto:aberger@holdenyouthsoccer.org)

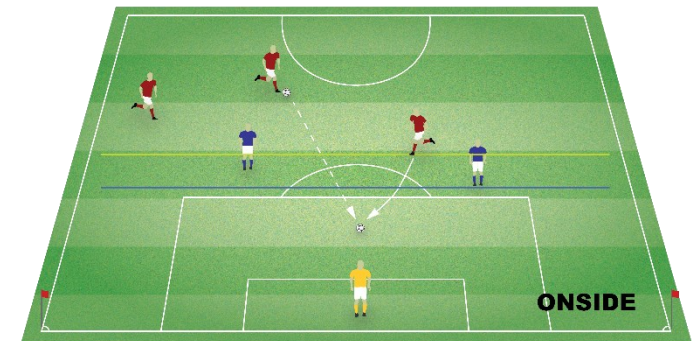
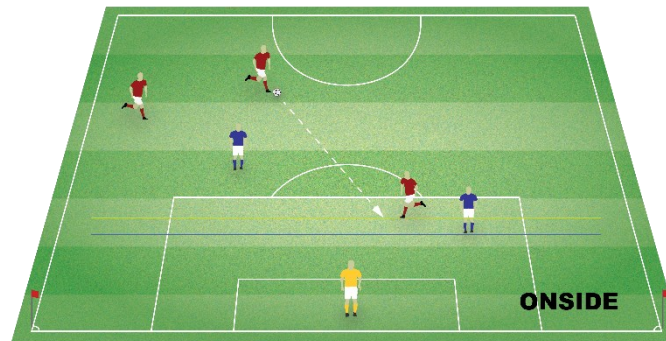
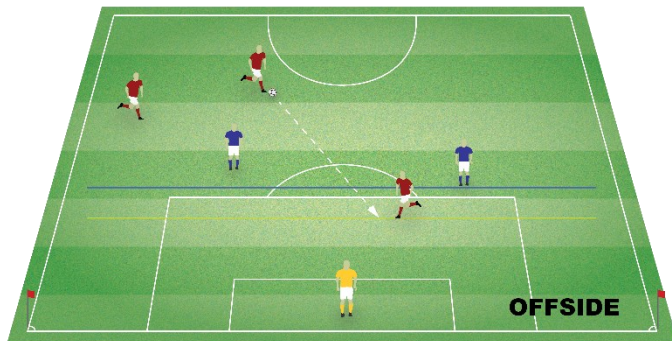


# LAW 11: OFFSIDE



Call offsides (excluding U8) when it is obvious, only call offside if you see it.

- Offside – It is not an offense to be in an offside position.
- Offside – a player is called offside if, when the ball is played forward any part of their body which can legally play the ball is:
  - in the opponent's half and
  - nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball and the second to last opponent



# LAW 12: FOULS & MISCONDUCT

You should call a free-kick if there is an obvious and excessive contact between players. Hand balls will happen, call it when it is intentional.

- A Direct free-kick is called if a player is careless, reckless or uses excessive force:
  - Charges at a player
  - Kicks or tries to kick a player
  - Pushes a player
  - Hits or tries to hit a player
  - Trips or tries to trip a player
  - Handles the ball (except the goalkeeper)
  - Holds an opponent
- An Indirect free-kick is called if a player:
  - Plays in a dangerous way e.g. high kick
  - Dissent
  - Stops the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from their hands
  - Is offside
  - Goalkeeper pick the ball up from an intentional pass from their teammate



# LAW 13: FREE KICKS

At U8 every foul should be indirect, at Grades 3 and above you should distinguish between a direct and indirect freekick.

- A goal can be scored directly from a direct free-kick
- Opposing players must be approx. 10 yards away from the ball
- The ball must be stationary, and the ball is in play when it clearly moves
- A direct free kick inside the penalty area results in a penalty kick
  
- A goal can not be scored directly from an indirect free-kick
- If the ball enters the goal from an indirect free-kick a goal-kick is awarded
- Opposing players must be approx. 10 yards away from the ball
- The ball must be stationary, and the ball is in play when it clearly moves
- An indirect free kick can be called inside the penalty area



# LAW 14: THE PENALTY KICK

A penalty kick is awarded if a player commits a direct free kick offence inside their penalty area

- Only the attacker taking the kick and the goalie can be inside the penalty area
- All other players must be behind the penalty mark
- The attacker can not contact the ball twice during the kick
- The kick starts in the referee's whistle
- The ball must move forward after its kicked
- The goalkeeper must have at least one foot on or behind the line when the kick is taken
- If the goalkeeper saves the kick, the ball is considered live
- If the ball hits the crossbar or goal post the ball is considered live but the attacker who took the kick can not touch the ball until another places touches the ball



# LAW 15: THROW IN

A throw-in is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball when the whole of the ball passes over the touchline, on the ground or in the air.

- You can offer a second chance for players in Grades 2, 3, and 4.
- For U8 players, if it continues to be illegal, ignore it.
- For grade 3 and 4, if the second attempt is also illegal the throw goes to the opposing teams.
- You can not score directly from a throw-in.
  
- For all players remind them of the basics.
  - At least one foot on or behind the line
  - Release the ball before it comes over the head
  - One foot must remain on the ground at all times



# LAW 16: THE GOAL KICK

A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the attacking team.

A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents.

- For Grade 2, 3, and 4, the opposing team must retreat to a build out line or half way line.
- Once the ball is touched the ball is live.
- The team with the ball can be inside the penalty area but opposing team can not.



# LAW 17: CORNER KICK

A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the defending team.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents.





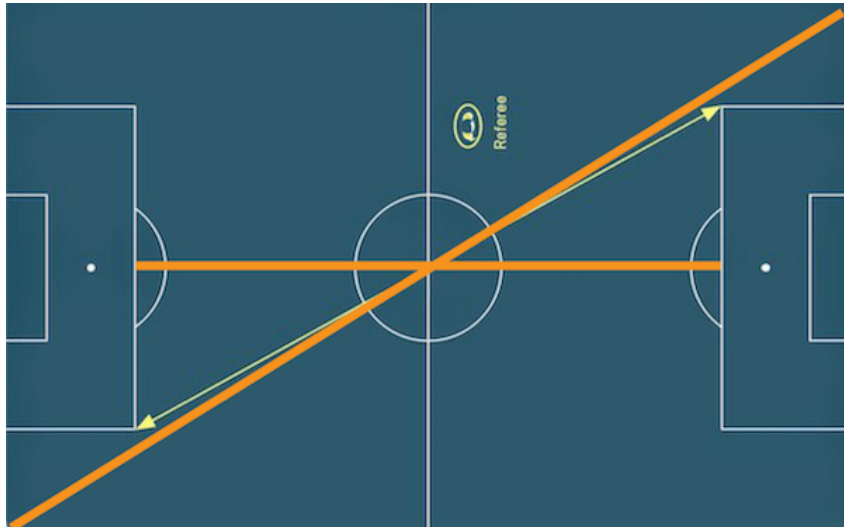
# POSITIONING & MECHANICS



# POSITIONING

Its hard to cover the entire field as a single referee, don't just stay in the center circle because its in the middle.

Try to run from corner to corner and box to box for the best possible position.



Diagonal, from corner flag to corner flag and penalty arc to penalty arc is a good guide.



# REFEREE HAND SIGNALS



Penalty kick



Advantage (1)



Advantage (2)



Indirect free kick



Direct free kick



Corner kick



Goal kick



Red and yellow card





# COMMUNICATION



# COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is essential to maintain control of the game, and promote a positive experience for parents, players and coaches.

- Be clear and concise, avoid jargon or complicated explanations
- Maintain open and positive body language, stand tall and make eye contact
- Be strong with the whistle
- Use firm but respectful verbal commands for decisions
- Use hand signals to reinforce your decisions
- Check in with coaches and players before and after the match



# AUTHORITY & CONFLICT



Be prepared to de-escalate conflicts by remaining calm and composed. Listen actively to concerns from players or coaches and address them respectfully.

Keys to maintaining authority:

- Know the rules
- Act confidently
- Clear signals
- Dress the part
- Pre-game communication
- Be fair and consistent

Keys to managing conflict:

- Stay calm
- Listen actively
- Use “I” statements
- Set boundaries
- Redirect focus
- Seek support
- Know when to walk away





# EQUIPMENT



# UNIFORM

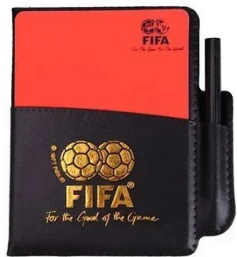
Being properly dressed in the appropriate uniform is the first step in being an effective referee

- Uniform shirts will be provided by HYS
- Ensure it is tucked in at all times
- Wear appropriate shorts and socks
- Socks should be pulled up to the knee



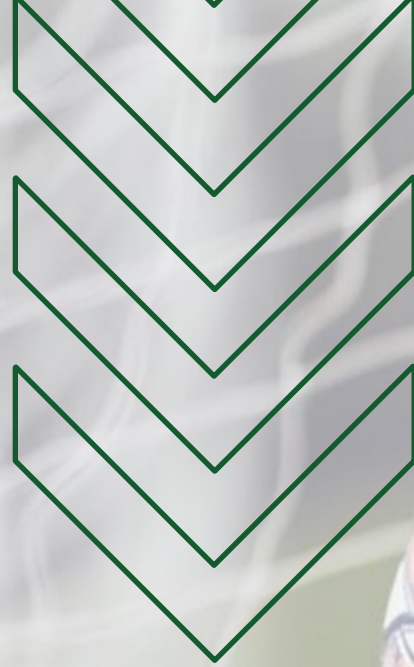
# EQUIPMENT

Ensuring you have the necessary tools will help you feel more confident and prepare you to be successful





# FIELD SESSION



**RECAP**



# RECAP

Know the rules

Be confident

Be prepared

Try to make it a positive experience for everyone



# RESOURCES



We have three primary resources for HYS referees.

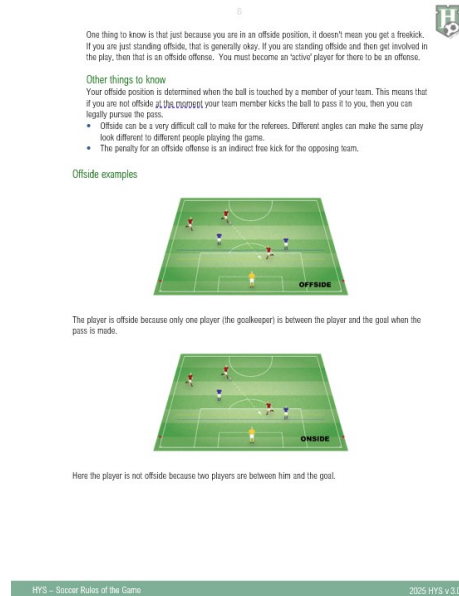
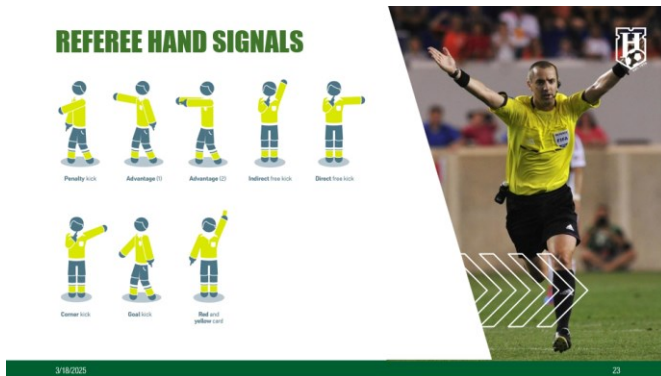
This [presentation](#) on the HYS website

A condensed version of the [rules](#) is on the HYS website as well as the [official iFAB rules](#)

Our team is always available for support

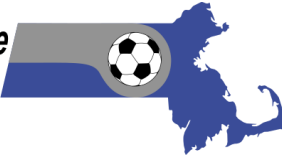
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# EDUCATION

Massachusetts State Referee Committee



Mass State Referee Committee is the local governing body for referees, there are step by step instructions on how to become a referee.



[Home](#) » [Becoming A Referee](#) » Steps to Become A Referee

## Steps To Become a Referee

With an emphasis on safety and education the process to become a USSF-certified referee through the MSRC has several steps. In the process you will create accounts on [our website](#) and on the [US Soccer Learning Center](#) website, learn about safety with children, do some guided instruction before a class, take a class, and take a post-course test. For those over 18 years old, you have a couple other requirements. This page outlines the steps.

### 1. Create an Account — MSRC/Massref

Creating an account with the MSRC allows you to fully utilize the features of our site, sign up for





# THANK YOU & QUESTIONS

