

Referee Return to Play Procedures for all Youth Competitions in State of CT

This information is being sent to all referees registered in the State of CT.

The Youth Sports landscape is dynamically changing quickly.

The following procedures are to establish a starting point for the upcoming Youth Soccer Fall season.

We expect that these procedures will change to some degree as the season progresses.

Please be on the lookout for changes as the season progresses.

Connecticut Junior Soccer and the Connecticut State Referee Program in partnership are implementing the policies below that will take precedence over all other policies or procedures for all sanctioned US Youth Soccer matches in the State of CT. Unless "Note"d, these policies may not be modified at the field. If it is not specifically mentioned below, the standard Laws of the Game (LOTG) and Rules of Competition shall apply.

1. In lieu of a local policy establishing a field configuration with spectators and players, teams will be required to be across the field from each other, diagonally behind the position of the assistant referees. Parents / spectators for each team will be to their own teams right hand side on the other half of the field (same touchline). The bench area where the players and coaches are sitting is required to be five yards off the side of the field to protect the assistant referee.... Note: Clubs may have guidelines based on their facility setups that make more sense, i.e. Stadium environments, or facilities with multiple fields running parallel to each other. The referee shall follow local club protocols when made available to them.
2. Referees will no longer handle player passes, or conduct a player check-in. Each Head Coach will submit a team roster containing the player name, US Soccer Pass ID, and player uniform number to the center referee prior to the game. The referee shall not collect, receive, or keep player passes or paper copies containing pictures of the players and/or PII/PHI information. Head coaches will have player passes available at every match in the event that a player eligibility question is raised. Coaches may validate those player passes among themselves if needed. Coaches will verify verbally to the referee that players on their team are properly equipped.
3. Any questions related to player eligibility or player pass evaluation is the responsibility of the head coaches. The referee shall notify the SYRA (syra@ctreferee.net) via email of any disagreements or problems at the field concerning player eligibility.
4. Referees will no longer keep player passes for ejected players or coaches. (Handled in Procedure #9)

5. There will no longer be a pre-game coin toss or conference among player captains and the referee crew. The home team will pick the half of the field to defend, the visiting team will kick off. In matches that require or mandate a winner, standard protocols will be followed according to the LOTG and the Rules of Competition.
6. Referees are not required to wear a mask. They must wear one when coming to and leaving the field area.
7. Referees are not mandated to use an electronic whistle.
8. Referees are not required or allowed to administer spectator adherence to social distancing guidelines. Spectators are required to social distance, and wear a mask when attending Youth Soccer Matches.
9. Individuals in the technical area (player substitutes, coaches, administrators) must wear a mask at all times. Substitutes checking into the match shall report to the mid-field line ready to play (without a mask).
10. Referees shall report RED cards electronically through Central Assign (www.ctreferee.net). The referee shall send an email to the SYRA (syra@ctreferee.net) for all RED cards issued. The email should contain a picture of the two rosters submitted from the head coaches, and the player or coach clearly identified on the roster that received the RED card. The Referee shall not keep any player passes or pictures of player passes for any reason.
11. Instances of spitting on the field are punishable by YELLOW card on first offense, and then RED card for second offense.
12. For league matches, clubs may assume that their opponents have met appropriate Return to Play guidelines. For friendly matches, clubs can validate that their opponents have met the Return to Play guidelines by contacting their District Vice-Presidents.
13. Referees are mandated to notify the SYRA (syra@ctreferee.net) should they become ill, or feel ill after officiating, or receive a positive diagnosis of COVID-19.
14. All questions related to game day procedures for Youth Competitions shall be forwarded to the SYRA at syra@ctreferee.net.

Questions you may have:

What is considered to be a valid roster? The referee should accept any roster format that is submitted by the Head Coach. Several formats across the State are available, any one of them is valid, depending on registration systems, and other elements. There are no identifying marks required to be on the roster to make it valid.

Can the roster be modified? Yes, the coach may add players to the roster by hand writing them onto the roster. No problem.

What if the coach does not have a roster available? Ask the coach to provide a hand written list of players and uniform numbers. If the coach refuses, allow the game to be played and report the incident to the SYRA at syra@ctreferee.net.

What should I do if a spectator is not wearing a mask?The referee should concentrate on what is happening on the field. Clubs are required to provide a COVID director, field marshall, or other representative to handle spectator compliance with return to play protocols. If the referee feels that his or her own safety is at risk, treat this in the same way you would any other spectator based mis-conduct. Notify the head coach of the home team, if the spectator refuses, stop the game, and leave the facility. Once you are in a safe place, notify the SYRA at syra@ctreferee.net of the incident.

Thankful for your service in this time,

Ron Packard
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