



## Utah SRC Memo

To: Utah Soccer Officials and Administrators

From: Paul Scott, Utah State Referee Administrator

Date: 3/17/25

Subject: US Soccer New Referee Abuse Policy

U.S. Soccer's strengthened Referee Abuse Prevention Policy has clear suspensions for physical offenses and non-physical offenses. Tier 1 offenses include insulting, belittling, insinuating, or taunting behavior undermining referee authority. Tier 2 offenses include harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or abusive or threatening (non-physical) language. Policy language and penalties framework details can be found [here](#).

Some actions that previously resulted in yellow cards or were overlooked will now result in red cards. Referees must distinguish between emotional outbursts, dissent, and abuse based on context, player, and game emotions. For instance, a player saying "f-off" in a normal tone of voice after a call against them while walking away is an emotional outburst. This can be ignored at the adult level, but the referee may want to check on the player later. A player saying "that was a crap call and you don't know what you're doing" is dissenting and should be given a card. A player furiously yelling "you are a f'ing clown" with spit flying out of their mouth is abusive and should be given a red card.

A coach or player who says something derogatory is taking a risk, as it depends on how the words are received. If the referee is threatened with "You're never going to ref here again" or their integrity is questioned with "How much are they paying you," a red card should be given. If a referee feels threatened or their integrity is questioned, a red card should be given. Referees are not changing their methods or management tools; the consequences for crossing the line have changed, and the line itself has shifted slightly. Abuse will not be tolerated.

Anyone who witnesses abuse or assault can now file a report. If a referee is reported for being abused, they should be prepared to explain why they didn't give a red card, which may be understandable in some cases.

If an assault occurs, the assignor, SRA, and the person in charge of the competition must be notified immediately. Every crew member must submit a report of what they witnessed in their own words within 24 hours. The report should be sent to the SRA, assignor, and the person in charge of the competition. If help is needed to write the report, the referee can ask their mentor, a member of the SRC, or their assignor.

If you have any questions, please contact me.