

FRU/FYRU REFEREE ABUSE POLICY

For the purpose of this policy, abuse is any conduct that falls under World Rugby Law 9, subsections 12, 27, and 28, governing verbal and physical abuse, acts contrary to good sportsmanship, and respecting the authority of the Match Official. The scope of this policy expressly extends this standard beyond participating players to include coaches, administrators, player reserves, medical personnel, photographers, or other persons allowed inside the playing enclosure or technical zones, or those who are along the sidelines (not within the stands of a stadium setting).

Referee abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Any intentional, but nonconsensual, contact with any Match Official.
- Verbal and nonverbal communication which contains foul or abusive language, or which implies or directly threatens physical harm or injury of any sort to any Match Official.
- Any threat of damage to or damage to a Match Official's personal property.
- Repeated instances of on-field player dissent (as defined in the World Rugby Laws).
- Repeated questioning of calls during ongoing match play, whether to the referee or to an AR, by those permitted to be in the playing enclosure (see scope above). The only individuals who may raise questions with calls are head coaches and captains. Questions should be posed in a respectful manner directly to the referee. A captain may politely speak to a Match Official during a match; a coach may politely speak to a Match Official before and after the match.
- After being warned, as provided in this rule, any failure of any player, coach, administrator, medical and support personnel, or fan to immediately leave the playing enclosure or technical zone at the request of any Match Official.
- Sexual or violent gestures and/or kicking or throwing objects in response to the Match Officials' call, non-call, or other action in officiating the match. Referee abuse is not only limited to the duration of the match:
 - Abuse may occur at any time that the Match Official is acting in their duties between arrival at and departure from the Match location.
 - Abuse may happen through questioning/impugning the honesty/integrity of match officials away from pitch.

Referee protocol for handling referee abuse:

- As per World Rugby Law 9, upon recognizing referee abuse, the Match Official may penalize a player or issue further sanction by use of a card.
- As per the USAR Game Management Guidelines, for Referee Abuse involving coaches, administrators, player reserves, medical personnel, photographers, or other persons allowed inside the playing enclosure or technical zones, or those who are along the sidelines (not within the stands of a stadium setting) who are observed or perceived to commit abuse against Match Officials, the following actions should be followed:

1) The Match Official will stop the match and speak with the captain and/or the Head Coach,

requesting that the offending individual(s) be addressed, to change their behavior immediately, or face ejection from the playing enclosure. **This constitutes an official warning**.**

2) Upon subsequent offense, the Match Official will stop the match and request that the offending individual(s) be removed from the playing enclosure.

3) A refusal to affect the removal by Club Officials and/or a refusal to leave by the offending individual(s) will result in the match being abandoned and the team in question will forfeit the game.

4) In the event of a third offense from others affiliated with the same Club, the Match Official will abandon the match and the team in question will forfeit the game.

- The Match Official is required to report any official warnings or subsequent actions to the FRU/FYRU using the current match reporting template. Additionally, the same report must be filed with the FRRRA leadership.
- The FRRRA are required to report to the USAR Referee and Laws Committee all incidents of referee abuse and offenders must be cited using the formal process as outlined by the FRU/FYRU and USA Rugby Disciplinary Procedures.
- Additionally, Match Officials may choose to file a report of a crime to local authorities.
- If a Referee has concerns that abuse is not appropriately handled, they can invoke a process through the USAR RLC JO

Sanctions for referee abuse:

1. Players carded during a match for referee abuse will be sanctioned by the FRU/FYRU Disciplinary Committee in accordance with WR Reg 17.

2. Sanctions for club-affiliated Individuals (coaches, administrators, player reserves, medical personnel, photographers, or other persons allowed inside the playing enclosure or technical zones):

1st offense - sideline ban - 2 weeks

2nd offense - sideline ban - 6 weeks

3rd offense - sideline ban - 6 months

Note: **Repeated official warnings in a single season (more than 2) will count as a sanctionable offense.

3. Sanctions applied to Clubs for offenses by individuals that are club affiliated (see item 1 & 2 above) and spectators (those who are along the sidelines, not within the stands of a stadium setting). These sanctions are applied to the entire club in addition to the individual sanctions above for cumulative actions by players (item 1) and other club affiliated individuals (item 2).

1st offense - official warning

2nd offense - ARs required (if available) at club's expense including match fee/travel costs for the remainder of the season (home or away)

3rd offense - \$500 fine (withholding of assignments until fine is paid and forfeiture of all matches until the fine is paid).

4th offense - additional \$500 and no referees will be assigned to any home matches for the remainder of the season - these matches will be changed to away matches and the cost of fields and officials will be paid by the offending club.

5th offense – additional \$500 plus Club suspension from all competition for the remainder of the season.