

The Michiana Soccer Referees Association Code of Conduct

Adopted by the MSRA Board of Directors, March 14, 2013

By agreeing to become a soccer official, an individual chooses to represent the sport and all sanctioning organizations. Particularly at the youth level, including high school, officials must demonstrate good judgment, self-discipline and extraordinary responsibility so as to contribute positively to the overall development of the players, the good of the sport, and the honor of the profession.

This code serves to supplement codes of conduct and ethics articulated by the sanctioning organizations for which MSRA assigns. It is not intended to replace or override those codes. Where there is no overriding interest from the other organization, this code shall apply.

USSF Code of Ethics for Referees (*reproduced here due to the fact that all MSRA members are expected to be USSF-certified officials*)

1. I will always maintain the utmost respect for the game of soccer.
2. I will conduct myself honorably at all times and maintain the dignity of my position.
3. I will always honor an assignment or any other contractual obligation.
4. I will attend training meetings and clinics so as to know the Laws of the Game, their proper interpretation and their application.
5. I will always strive to achieve maximum team work with my fellow officials.
6. I will be loyal to my fellow officials and never knowingly promote criticism of them.
7. I will be in good physical condition.
8. I will control the players effectively by being courteous and considerate without sacrificing fairness.
9. I will do my utmost to assist my fellow officials to better themselves and their work.
10. I will not make statements about any games except to clarify an interpretation of the Laws of the Game.
11. I will not discriminate against nor take undue advantage of any individual group on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin,
12. I consider it a privilege to be a part of the United States Soccer Federation and my actions will reflect credit upon that organization and its affiliates.

MSRA Supplement

1. In all games to which I am assigned, I will faithfully, effectively and impartially enforce the Laws of the Game and any applicable Rules of the Competition to ensure a fair and safe match.
2. I will make myself available, whenever possible, for game assignments for which I am qualified and will carry my share of the load in every assignment I accept.
3. I will not embarrass or discredit my fellow officials, the MSRA, or any referees' association to which I belong.
4. I will not accept any assignments at which I or any member of my immediate family has an affiliation with either of the teams playing. Exceptions may include substituting at late notice for another official and will not include assignment to the center referee position. It is my responsibility to make my assignors aware of my affiliations.
5. I will constantly strive to improve my own refereeing techniques and mastery of the laws of the game. In that spirit, I will accept sincere, constructive feedback from fellow referees and assessors with good nature.

6. I will restrict any observations of fellow referees to constructive feedback in well-mannered, private referee-to-referee discussions with them, and not within hearing distance of players, coaches or spectators.
7. I do hereby acknowledge my fellow referees' total authority over any matches over which they are duly assigned to officiate, and I pledge that I will not interfere with the carrying out of their prescribed duties, before, during or after a match.
8. I also acknowledge that, as a coach, player or spectator, my conduct towards, and my respect for, the officials is more closely noticed by all concerned. I will, therefore, strive to set a high standard of personal conduct under these circumstances to serve as an example to all.
9. I understand that I should wear only the approved and appropriate referee uniform with a current badge, and that my uniform be clean, neat, and in a good state of repair.
10. I will not partake of any type of alcoholic beverage or other drugs immediately before or during any game assignment, nor will I smoke or use tobacco products while performing officiating duties.
11. I do hereby acknowledge and accept the jurisdiction of MSRA, the state associations, and their respective committees, where applicable, over my conduct and performance as a registered referee.
12. I will pay applicable membership fees to the officials' associations to which I belong.
13. I furthermore understand that I may be disciplined for breaches of this Code of Conduct or any of its articles or provisions. Such disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, being placed on probation, suspended, refused referee registration, or removed from games.

Procedures for accepting games outside MSRA jurisdiction

- I will anticipate time conflicts throughout the coming season and inform my assignors of my block-out dates as far in advance as possible.
- It is my first responsibility to honor assignments I have accepted. If an opportunity arises to accept an assignment which does not conflict with those I have already accepted, I will obtain permission from my assignor before accepting the new assignment.
- Under no circumstances will I accept an assignment which requires me to cancel an assignment I have already accepted.
- For the good of the entire association, I will not accept assignments solicited by schools or leagues in the MSRA assigning area which have decided not to have their games assigned by MSRA.

Discipline Procedures

- In the event that a violation is brought to the attention of the MSRA, it will be referred to the Discipline Committee, with the MSRA President copied. A member of the Discipline Committee will notify the official in question, listen to that person's accounting of the incident, and inform him or her that the Committee will gather information as needed.
- When the Committee is satisfied that the fact-finding stage is complete, they will determine whether the incident is indeed a violation of this code. If so, they will decide on its severity and what sanctions are warranted. A member of the Committee will notify the official in question of the Committee's decisions. At the same time, the Committee will inform the MSRA Executive Committee of the outcome of their investigation.
- If the official in question wishes to appeal the decision of the Discipline Committee, a panel of three non-Discipline Committee members of the Executive Committee will review the facts. The decision of the Executive Committee is final.

Violations

The Code of Conduct clarifies the expectations of members of the Association. To provide further clarity for members, the Board, and the Discipline Committee, this section of the code lists specific behaviors that are considered violations of the code. Listed in the second column is the level of serious for each violation which, in order of severity is Minor, Serious, Severe, and Extreme.

With regard to honoring assignments:

Violation	Level
Being late (On time is defined as 15-30 minutes before the scheduled start time.)	Minor
Turn-backs less than three days prior to the scheduled date	Minor
Excessive turn-backs	Serious
Missing an assignment	Serious
Accepting assignments outside MSRA jurisdiction at the expense of MSRA assignments	Serious

With regard to proper behaviors:

Violation	Level
Showing up for an assignment unprepared (uniform, equipment)	Minor
Accepting assignments with teams to which one (or an immediate family member) is affiliated	Minor
Not disclosing affiliations with teams	Serious
Disrespectful behavior toward players, coaches, or fans (gloating, abusive language, sexual harassment, shouting)	Severe
Disrespectful behavior toward other referees (open criticism, abusive language, dissent while in a non-referee role)	Severe
Showing partiality	Severe
Consuming alcohol or other drugs or using tobacco products while on assignment	Extreme
Waging on games	Extreme
Fixing or participating in fixing games	Extreme

With regard to skill development and professionalism:

Violation	Level
Accepting assignments without being properly licensed or certified	Serious
Accepting assignments without being current on applicable membership fees	Serious
Disrespecting or discrediting MSRA	Variable

Note that violations of this Code of Conduct that are not specifically mentioned above will be assigned a severity level and dealt with on a case by case basis.

Sanctions

Sanctions for violations of this Code of Conduct include but are not limited to the following:

- Withholding assignments for a specified period of time, which may include all games within the jurisdiction of the Association
- Suspension from the association for a specified period of time
- Expulsion from the association, with notification to the SRA, DRA and IHSAA