



## Zero-Tolerance Policy

Youth sports are a great opportunity for a child to build self-esteem and learn fundamental skills. It's also an opportunity for adults to become positive role models and teach the value and importance of good sportsmanship.

The increase in aggressive and violent behavior towards referees during youth events has forced BAYFA to remind all coaches, players, parents and spectators that there is a ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY in place. Abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting, and other behavior (including but not limited to sarcasm, taunting, etc.) will not be tolerated during any BAYFA event. Drinking alcohol, smoking, vaping, or use of illegal substances is also prohibited during BAYFA events and within the vicinity of playing fields or practice areas.

It is the **responsibility of the COACHES to provide referee support and spectator control**. This policy will apply to coaches, players, parents and spectators at all times prior to, during and after the game, at the soccer field, and its immediate surrounding areas.

BAYFA Board Members are volunteers elected to their position by other board members and team officials. BAYFA Board Members wear red shirts or jackets with the BAYFA logo on them so that they can be easily identified at the fields. The BAYFA Board is dedicated to ensuring everyone has a positive soccer experience.

Any concerns related to the Zero Tolerance Policy should be reported to a BAYFA Board Member as soon as possible either in person, by email.

### **PARENTS AND SPECTATORS:**

No parent or other spectator shall persistently address the referee(s) at any time; before, during, or after the game. The term referee also includes the assistant referees.

This includes but is not limited to the following before, during, or after the game:

1. Parents and spectators shall remain on their team's half of the field
2. Spectators shall not make derogatory comments to players of either team.
3. Spectators shall not make derogatory comments to other parents or spectators of either team.

4. Spectators shall not dispute calls during or after the game.
5. Spectators shall not advise the referee to watch certain players or attend to rough play.
6. Spectators shall not yell at the referee, EVER, including criticism, sarcasm, harassment, intimidation, discriminatory comments or negative feedback of any kind.

The only allowable exceptions to the above are:

1. Spectators may respond to a referee who has initiated a conversation with a parent or spectator.
2. Spectators may point out an emergency or safety issues, such as a player down on the field or observed lightning.
3. Telling a referee crew good job after a game is welcoming and appreciated.

## **PLAYERS**

Communications between players and referees are governed by the FIFA Laws of the Game. Penalties for violating the Laws of the Game will be governed by the Laws themselves and in some cases in conjunction with the zero-tolerance policy in place at BAYFA.

At no time is inappropriate language, towards officials, ANY players, coaches, or spectators acceptable. Foul or abusive language, derogatory comments, name calling, bullying, etc. will be handled swiftly and in most cases with **IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL** from the game and the possibility of additional sanctions imposed by BAYFA and the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA).

## **COACHES, ASSISTANT COACHES, and TEAM MANAGERS**

It is the responsibility of all coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and spectators in all matches. Failure to do so undermines the referee's authority and the integrity of the game, resulting in a hostile environment for players, the referee(s), coaches, team managers, and spectators. As role models for all of the participants and spectators, coaches participating in a BAYFA event are expected to be supportive of, and to applaud the effort, good play, and sportsmanship on the part of ALL players from either team in a contest. By example, coaches and team managers are expected to show that although they are competing in a game, participants have respect for the opponent, referees and spectators at all times.

BAYFA will not tolerate negative behavior exhibited either by demonstrative actions and gestures or by ill-intentioned remarks, including those addressed toward the referees, players or coaches of an opposing team. Coaches shall not interact directly or indirectly with the coaches or players of the opposing team during the game in any manner that may be construed as negative, hostile or sarcastic either by way of demonstrative actions and gestures or by ill-intentioned remarks. Coaches exhibiting hostile, negative, sarcastic, or otherwise ill intentioned

behavior toward referees, opposing players or coaches will be subject to sanction by the referee with the possibility of additional sanctions imposed by BAYFA and the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA).

Coaches shall not offer dissent to any call made by the officials at any time. Coaches shall not address the referee during the game except to:

1. Respond to a referee who has initiated a conversation
2. Point out emergency or safety issues
3. Make substitutions
4. Ask the referee to repeat a call (this should be infrequent)
5. Ask for the time remaining in the half (this should be infrequent).

Coaches are allowed to ask a referee after a game, in a polite and constructive way, to explain a law or foul but not judgment calls made in a game. Polite and friendly concern can be exchanged with the referee. If the polite tone of the

conversation changes, the referee may abandon the exchange at any time. Absolutely no sarcasm, harassment or intimidation is allowed.

### **PENALTIES:**

1. If any game is interrupted because of behavioral issues, involved parties will have to comply with a BAYFA Appeals & Disciplinary panel review.
2. Depending on the gravity of the incident, various suspension lengths may be imposed by BAYFA.

A referee is under **NO OBLIGATION** to provide a **WARNING** before a **DISMISSAL**.

### **Guidelines for a great Game Day:**

**Play with integrity:** One of the most essential lessons a child can learn from sports is to follow the rules. Make sure your team understands the rules and doesn't break them, even if they have the opportunity to get away with it.

**Respect the officials:** It's important to teach not only our young athletes but also our parents and coaches to respect the referees and officials. Our kids have a watchful eye and take notice when parents and coaches are disrespectful. Do not shout insults or verbally abuse the referee. It's hard for a child to learn respect for the referee or other officials when their parents set a poor example. The referee *can* and *will* stop the match if the crowd becomes discourteous.

**Be a good sport.** Compliment your child upon his/her good plays and ignore the mistakes. Your child will be happy you noticed his good qualities! However, remember that your child is a member of a team. Lift our teammates up and help them reach their potential by letting the other players know

you support them too. Being a good teammate means also being a good person on and off the field regardless of the outcome.

**Maintain self-control.** Keep your cool, have a positive attitude, and don't overreact during practice or games. Suffer in silence (or moan softly) whenever something occurs that goes against your child's team. A display of anger may inflame a delicate situation resulting in embarrassment for you or your child. Some parents embarrass their own children by making a spectacle of themselves.

**Let the Coaches coach:** Parents should not shout instructions to their child or chime in with advice for them or other parents. This only causes confusion, since the coach has already instructed your child on how to play. If you do shout instructions, your child will probably try to please you and the coach at the same time. In trying to do two things at one time, the child may become unable to handle his loyalties and end up pleasing neither parent or coach.

**Enjoy the game:** Do not run up and down the sidelines. Find a comfortable place to sit down or stand, relax and enjoy the match. Your child will forget about today's game. Next week he/she will probably have forgotten the score. However, both of you will remember the good time the child had playing the most popular sport in the world.

**ALWAYS REMEMBER:** Be respectful in victory or defeat and enjoy the beautiful game!