



6/30/2020

To all the referees in NJ,

We hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe and healthy during these unprecedented times and at the same time continuing to train and stay fit for when we return to play.

First, we want to thank each and every member of the referee community that has given so much to the game. Without all of you, the game of soccer could not happen.

As you are aware, the State of New Jersey has given the green light for competitive soccer games to return beginning July 6<sup>th</sup>.

We have already seen tournaments posted and various levels of returning to play for some of the leagues. Some assignors have sent notes asking referees to post their availability for assignment. You, as a referee have NO obligation to referee any game if you believe you could be at risk of contracting COVID-19. The State Referee Committee will support any of you who wish to decline games during these times. We understand you may be of the vulnerable population, taking care of a loved one, or in fact, recovering from the illness yourself.

The health of yourself and your family is paramount and you should not put the game of soccer ahead of your health or those around you.

Players will be asked to abide by several guidelines, including:

Players will be encouraged to not engage in standard celebrations and comradery of the game. Those include high fives, hugs and "pile on" in goal celebrations.

Handshakes before and after the game will likely be discontinued.

Despite any of these guidelines, the Laws of the Game provide for no disciplinary action if those do occur. You as a referee should, in the spirit of the game, remind players of these recommended guidelines if need be, but NO SANCTIONS (cards) are appropriate.

Individuals who referee should also abide by several guidelines, including:

Bring and use your own equipment (cards, whistles, flags).

We realize this may lead to ARs having mis-matched flag styles.

Bring hand sanitizer and use it before and after each period of play.

Referees should consider regularly disinfecting their whistles (a good idea always).

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We recommend wearing a mask before and after the game, and during the halftime interval.

While masks are not recommended during periods of athletic activity, Referees and/or ARs are permitted to wear masks during the game if they so choose. (Just as you should check with your doctor before a new strenuous activity, so too should you check before wearing a mask while exercising).

Referees should enter the field with some social distance between the crew.

The coin toss should be conducted with social distancing in mind for not only the referees, but also the players who are present for the coin toss. No handshakes should take place by anyone participating in the coin toss.

Use your own coin only! If you need to borrow one from an AR, let that AR flip it!

Also, pick up the coin yourself... or simply catch it.

During the halftime interval, maintain appropriate social distance from the teams and each other.

Referees should not be helping players to their feet. Absolutely no touching of players in any way.

Cards should be presented with social distancing in mind and not directly in front of the participant.

Allow coaches onto the field to help minimize a mass confrontation if one occurs. Again, limit/eliminate contact with players during this situation. Do not attempt to physically separate participants.

Think "triangle of control" immediately.

If club linesmen are used, do not loan your flags for use. Instead, consider asking the volunteer to raise their hand when the ball fully crosses the touchline (or working without club linesmen).

When your assignments are done for the day, go directly home, shower and put on clean clothes.

In short, use common sense when dealing with players and coaches. Remember to LIMIT CONTACT in all instances.

As play resumes, please remember to stay safe, stay healthy and remember the spirit of the game.

We appreciate everyone involved in making this game possible!

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