



# Guam Football Association

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## ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY: FEBRUARY 2016

### PURPOSE

To help prevent physical assault and verbal abuse during sanctioned events the Guam Football Association (GFA) has a Zero Tolerance Policy. This policy applies to all coaches, players, parents, spectators and other supporters or referees effective immediately.

Abusive and obscene language, violent play/conduct, fighting and other behavior (including, but not limited to sarcasm, taunting, criticizing, etc.) deemed detrimental to the game will not be tolerated. The ultimate responsibility for the actions of coaches, players and spectators resides with all GFA member clubs. It is the responsibility of the coaches to provide referees support and spectator control, and it is the responsibility of the GFA member club to provide instructions to their coaches on how to implement sportsmanlike behavior to players and parents.

**This policy applies before, during and after the sanctioned event at the soccer field and immediate surrounding areas. Remember, the referee does not have to show a yellow card before showing a red card.**

### Parents & Spectators:

In the interest of a supportive and civil environment at games, parents must treat the Referee, opposing players, opposing coaches and opposing fans with respect. If a parent has concerns or complaints of any kind that he or she feels must be addressed during or after the game, those concerns or complaints must only be raised with his/her child's coach. No parent or spectators shall persistently address the referee or assistant referees at any time. This includes, but not limited to:

- a. Parents and spectators shall not dispute calls during or after the game. This includes questioning or criticizing the judgement or decisions of the Referee.
- b. Parents and spectators shall not make remarks to the referee(s) or advise the referee(s) to watch certain players or attend to rough play.
- c. Parents and spectators shall never yell at the referee(s), including criticism, sarcasm harassment, intimidation or feedback of any kind before, during or after the game.

The only allowable exceptions to the above are:

- a. Parents and spectators may respond to a referee who has initiated a conversation, until such time as the referee terminates the conversation.
- b. Parents and spectators may point out an emergency or safety issues, such as a player apparently injured on the field or observed fighting.

Additionally, parents and spectators shall not make derogatory comments to players, spectators or coaches of either team.

**Penalties (Parent & Spectators):**

In the opinion of the referee, depending on the severity of the offense, the referee may take any of the following actions: If in the judgement of the Referee, a parent or fan is abusive in any of these ways, play will be stopped, the coach representing the parent's or fan's team will be notified and that parent or fan will be required to cease the abusive behavior or leave the game. If this does not occur, the game will be discontinued at this point. If play is resumed, and, in the judgement of the Referee there is further abusive behavior on the part of the same parent or fan, or of other parents or fans, play will be stopped, the coach representing the parent's or fan's team will be notified and that parent or fan will be required to immediately leave the game. If they do not immediately leave the game, the game will be discontinued at this point.

The ultimate responsibility for the actions of the spectators resides with coaches and assistant coaches. Coaches will be held accountable for the actions of their players, parents, and spectators and may be subject to suspension, penalties or revocation of coaching privileges for grievous actions. Additionally a team, player or coach may be suspended from all future competitions until such time appropriate action has been taken with the parent/spectator to the satisfaction of the GFA Disciplinary Committee.

**Players:**

The conduct of the players is governed by the Laws of the Game as stated by FIFA. The Laws themselves describe penalties associated with violating the Laws of the Game. Additional penalties for players who engage in misconduct may be established by the club but may in no case be less severe than penalties established by GFA.

Each player must treat the Referee, his/her own coach and players, as well as the opposing players and opposing coaches with respect. Abusive behavior, defined as (but not limited to):

- Abusive and obscene language or gestures of any kind directed toward another person,
- Violent conduct or fighting,
- Questioning or criticizing the judgement or decisions of the Referee,
- Taunting or criticizing coaches, players, parents or fans of the opposing team, or the referee, will not be tolerated.

In severe cases in which the said player is ejected from the match due to either an accumulation of two (2) yellow cards or a red card will be reported to GFA Disciplinary Committee and will be assessed a minimum of an additional one game (1) suspension and minimum fine of \$25 .

**Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Bench Personnel:**

It is the responsibility of all coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and supporters 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, referee(s), coaches, assistant coaches and parents/spectators.

As role models for all of the participants and spectators, coaches participating in s GFA sanctioned events are expected to be supportive of, and to acknowledge the effort, good play and sportsmanship on the part of ALL players from either team in a game. By example, coaches & assistant coaches are expected to show that although they are competing in a game, they have respect for their opponent, referees and spectators at all times. Any questions, concerns, criticisms or complaints of the assistant coaches, players, parents or fans about any aspect of the game must be voiced through their head coach.

The GFA sanctioned league will not tolerate negative behavior exhibited either by demonstrative actions and gestures, or by ill-intentioned remarks, including those addressed toward the referees or members of an opposing team. Coaches

exhibiting hostile, negative, sarcastic or otherwise ill-intended behavior toward referees, opposing players or coaches will be subject to disciplinary action by the GFA Youth Committee and/or GFA Disciplinary Committee.

- Coaches shall not interact directly or indirectly with the referee, or coaches and 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 shall not offer dissent to any call made by the referees at any time
- Coaches are not to address the Referee(s) during the game except to:
  - a. Respond to a referee who has initiated a conversation.
  - b. Point out emergency or safety issues.
  - c. Make substitutions.
  - d. Ask for the time remaining in the half.
  - e. Coaches are allowed to ask a referee after a game or during the halftime interval, in a polite and constructive way, to explain a law or foul, but not judgement calls made in the 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.
- Taunting, criticism, harassment, sarcasm, or intimidation of the opposing team's coaches, players, parents or fans, or of the Referee, will not be tolerated.

NOTE: It is recommended that coaches or other team members do not engage in any conversation with the match official once the match has concluded.

Coaches may address questions or concerns related to a referee's actions, conduct or abilities to the Referee Administrator for review and investigation after the game. This may also be addressed via email addressed to both GFA Youth Committee ([gfayouth@theguamfa.com](mailto:gfayouth@theguamfa.com)) and GFA Referee Committee ([gfareferee@theguamfa.com](mailto:gfareferee@theguamfa.com)). Requests for review or investigation of specific calls made by a referee during a game will not be considered.

**Penalties (Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Bench):**

In the opinion of the referee, depending on the severity of the offense, the referee may take any of the following actions during the game:

- a. The referee may issue a verbal warning to the offending coach or assistant coach. (Equivalent of a Yellow Card)
- b. The referee may eject the offending coach or assistant coach. Once ejected, the individual MUST leave the field immediately before the game resumes. (Equivalent of a Red Card)
- c. The referee should abandon the game, if the coach, assistant coach or trainer does not leave the field or any immediate adjoining area after having been instructed to do so.

Additional penalties associated with the ejection of a coach, assistant coach or bench personnel may be assessed by a GFA Disciplinary Committee in accordance to the GFA Disciplinary Code.

**NOTE:** Referees are instructed not to display any cards to coaches or assistant coaches or bench personnel. They are strictly reserved for players and substitutes.

All cases of alleged abuse or assault of a referee shall be reported to the GFA Referee Administrator within 48 hours of the match that engendered said behavior. GFA will then conduct a verification of the complaint and subsequent actions as required by applicable sections of the GFA Policy in effect at the time of the incident.

**Referee Abuse:**

- a. Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act no resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment.
- b. Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: using foul or abusive language toward a referee that implies or threatens physical harm; spewing any beverage on a referee's physical property; or spitting at (but no on) the referee.
- c. Questioning or criticizing the judgement or decisions of the Referee (with exception to descriptive provided above)

**Referee Assault:**

- a. Referee Assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee.
- b. For this purpose of the policy, "intentional act" shall mean an act intended to bring about a result which will invade the interests of another in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.
- c. Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee's uniform or personal property, i.e., car, equipment, etc.

**Games Disbanded Prior to the Conclusion by the Referee:**

When a game is disbanded by the referee prior to its conclusion due to unsporting behavior on the part of one or both teams, GFA Youth Committee will conduct an investigation and will issue a forfeit to either one or both teams and possibly from further competitions. The offending club(s) will also be assessed a probationary period and/or fine. In cases of extreme unsportsmanlike behavior, in the opinion of GFA, a team, player, coach, assistant coach or bench personnel may be banned from any further GFA sanctioned events and competitions.

GFA reserves the right to suspend or ban any participant who fails to comply with any GFA rules, regulations and policies. This is to ensure the health, welfare and safety of any player, coach, assistant coach, referee, board member, officials or spectators.