

U12 Referee Guidelines

Thanks for volunteering to referee in U12. These guidelines should answer your questions. For more information, please see the Region 10 website at www.ayso10.org, or The Laws of the Game at www.TheIFAB.com

Ball Size	**4**
Players per side	**9** (8 + goalkeeper)
Playing short-sided / minimum # of players	If one team has less than 9 players the coaches can agree to both play short, as long as all players play at least 3 quarters. **If a team has less than 7 players, it forfeits the game**. (It is encouraged that coaches arrange to do a scrimmage game – sharing players among the teams so that players that did show up get to play a game for fun.)
Minutes per half	**30** Substitution break near the 15 minute mark (recommended when the ball is out of play); this is not a coaching opportunity or team strategy session; limit this to under 60 seconds with the players on the field and the clock running. Minimum halftime is 5 minutes.
Quarters each player must play	**3** Verify reason w/ parent if possible - such as illness or leaving early - if playing fewer than 3 quarters.
Quarters as Goalkeeper	**3** A player can play a maximum of 3 quarters as goalkeeper in a game. If a player is the goalkeeper for 3 quarters, they must play another field position in the 4th quarter – they cannot be off the field for the 4th quarter.
Offside Calls, Throw-Ins & Trivialities	In this division, there is no grace period at the beginning of the season. Full enforcement of offside and improper throw-ins begins in the first week. Every effort should be made to keep the game moving and free from stoppages for trivial & doubtful infractions. Let them play and enjoy.
Player Safety	**Deliberate heading of the ball is allowed in U12.**
Sportsmanship Report on Game Card	On the back of the game card you are asked to assess sportsmanship on a scale of Excellent, Normal, or Poor. Unless there was something exceptional, you should indicate Normal for the category. Anything else should be indicated and noted in "comments."
Tolerance for players' jewelry, casts, slings, hard objects in hair, blood on uniform or body	**0** National and Region rules prohibit ALL jewelry. **Under no circumstances are players allowed to play with any form of casts, slings, earrings, necklaces, watches, rings, bracelets, or any hard object in the hair. (Prescription eyewear is allowed. Medical Alert bracelets and necklaces are allowed if taped to the body.)** In the event that any of these conditions exist, you must either take the corrective action or not allow the player to play. In the case of a player who presents him/herself with a cast or sling, that person may not be allowed to play even if he removes the cast or sling while present. ***A player may not play with any form of cast or sling even with a doctor's note.***

	In the event of any injury resulting in blood, the player must leave the field until all blood is removed or neutralized in accordance with AYSO Safe Haven Policy. Coaches may have hydrogen peroxide in their bags to neutralize the blood and extra uniforms. A player cannot re-enter the Game with untreated blood. All wounds need to be covered with a bandage.

- ✓ Arrive early to check fields and start on time (especially after we lose Daylight Savings Time)
- ✓ **Home Team** is the first team listed for each game. *Home team provides three game balls.*
- ✓ **Coin toss:** Either team calls heads or tails. The winner of the toss chooses which goal to attack in the first half; the loser of the coin toss takes the kick off in the first half.
- ✓ **Assistant Referees:** If 2 Assistant Referees are not present for the game, ask coaches if they have a spectator who is a badged referee who can be your AR. If badged ARs are not available, ask the coaches to provide someone to act as a "club linesperson". Talk to the ARs or linespeople and let them know what you want them to do or not to do based on your assessment of their experience and knowledge of the laws. Club linespeople can only indicate when the ball has left the field of play.
- ✓ **Youth Referees**: When a youth referee is participating, we practice a zero-tolerance policy for negative comments toward or about a youth referee. Before the game, indicate to the sidelines that a youth referee is participating and that there will be no warnings or second chances regarding inappropriate behavior; a single negative comment may result in dismissal.
- ✓ Keep spectators & teams on opposite sides of field, as assigned on the season schedule.
- ✓ If necessary, remind coaches to stay within the technical area (1 yard outside the touchline within 10 yards of the halfway line). No one should be standing behind the goal lines – ask them to move along the touchlines.
- ✓ **Game Cards**: obtain a game card from each coach when you check in the teams. At the end of game, complete the information on both sides of the card, sign them *LEGIBLY, and put them in the envelope in the equipment bin near the field.*
- ✓ Keep the game fun for you, the spectators, and most importantly, the PLAYERS. **Remind coaches, if necessary, that they are responsible for their sideline and anyone behaving inappropriately - parent, other spectator, coach or player - may be dismissed after having been warned.**
- ✓ **Keep the environment positive for the players – Remember P.I.E.: only Positive, Instructional and Encouraging comments from coaches & spectators.**

If you have any questions on these guidelines, please contact the Division Referee Coordinator listed on the scheduling system or the Regional Referee Administrator listed in the Board Contacts section of the Region 10 website. Also, as your children move on to older age divisions, remember to upgrade your referee badge by taking additional courses that are appropriate for their age. See any of the Region 10 referee staff on how to do this.