

Grapevine-Southlake Soccer Association
1001 West Northwest Highway, Suite D
Grapevine, Texas 76051
817-410-9950



GSSA Zero Tolerance Policy

GSSA maintains its Policies of the Grapevine Southlake Soccer Association on the website at www.gssasoccer.org under the "ABOUT" menu, selecting the "GSSA Policies" from the drop-down menu.

Referee Policies:

GSSA has adopted the US Soccer Abuse Prevention Policy which became effective on March 1, 2025. This US Soccer Policy supersedes any local policies and is the most up to date set of rules and expectations. It can be found at www.ussoccer.com/rap

Zero Tolerance:

All persons responsible for a team and spectators (coach, assistants, and team managers) shall adhere to GSSA's policies, including supporting the referee team. Failure to visibly support the referees may undermine the referee's authority and potentially create a hostile environment for players, the referees, and all other participants and spectators.

Consequently, the following additional policy is in effect for any GSSA tournament:

No unauthorized communications with referees during game play

Authorized communications:

For Persons Responsible for team (Coaches/Managers)

During the match:

- Responding to a referee who initiates a communication
- Respectfully asking a referee for clarification of a called penalty, without debate
- Making Substitutions
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues

At half-time or at the end of a match:

- A coach/manager may ask a referee to explain a rule(s) in a polite and constructive way. This is not an invitation to debate or litigate a called penalty.
- Polite and friendly feedback can be given to a referee.
- Absolutely NO sarcasm, harassment or intimidation will be tolerated (see US Soccer Abuse Prevention Policy).

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For Team Captains at appropriate age groups (U13+)

Before the match – Represents the team for the coin toss

During the match

- Responding to a referee who initiates a communication
- Respectfully asking for clarification of a called penalty, without debate
- Asking for clarification of a penalty's impact – (e.g. direct versus indirect kick, marking **required** distance. Note: distanced is required, and failure to provide it automatically can be grounds for a yellow card to be issued for “failure to respect the required distance” or “delaying the restart”)
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues

Penalties:

Violations of the US Soccer Abuse Prevention Policy are penalized according to the policy. All other violations of this zero-tolerance policy should result in the following:

Any serious infraction may result in an immediate Caution or Dismissal depending on seriousness of infraction (Dissent = Caution; Offensive, insulting, abusive = Dismissal)

At the referee's discretion the first minor infraction should result in a verbal warning. Any subsequent infraction should result in dismissal (the primary coach is responsible for team spectators).

Note: it is important to remember that the seriousness of the infraction is solely in the opinion of the referee responsible for the match. There is no redress of a caution or dismissal at the field to the head referee, a field marshal, or any GSSA Board Member. The only avenue for appeal is a properly constituted Appeals & Disciplinary hearing conducted according to the GSSA Rules or By-Laws as appropriate.

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For Spectators

During the match:

- In general, spectators should refrain from communicating with the referees, or communicating about the referee's performance, during the match. Polite and friendly feedback may be given to a referee after the match.
- Absolutely NO sarcasm, harassment or intimidation will be tolerated (see US Soccer Abuse Prevention Policy).
- If the Referee initiates a communication (e.g. asking spectators to back up to at least 3 yds off the touch line (sidelines), or move from behind the goals / goal lines), asking for clarification is acceptable (arguing or pushing back on the request is not acceptable)
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues (again, should be initiated by coach/assistant or team managers)

Penalties:

1st Infraction – Referee, field marshal, or GSSA board member has the authority to stop the match and ask the Coach to quiet the offending spectator.

2nd Infraction – Referee, field marshal, or GSSA board member shall instruct the Coach and the spectator to leave the field. The referee shall abandon the match if either does not leave the field (i.e. out of sight and sound).

Note: Any caution, ejection, or dismissal requires a signed NTSSA Outdoor Misconduct Report detailing the incident. Include just the facts and what was said verbatim, especially if the language is profane, foul, or threatening. In cases where a match is abandoned by the referee, the status of the match can ONLY be determined by the proper League or Association authority.

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All cautions, ejections, and dismissals will be submitted to the GSSA Board by the Commissioner of Officials within 48 hours for disciplinary review.

Authority of Grapevine Southlake Soccer Association

Your signature below states that you have read the GSSA Zero Tolerance Policy and will abide by these rules.

therein:

Name Printed

Signature

_____ Age Division

_____ Team Name