



*Massachusetts Youth Soccer
Massachusetts State Referee Committee*

GRASSROOTS REFEREE PROGRAM

GRASSROOTS REFEREE EDUCATION SYLLABUS

Note: This syllabus is based on a 4-hour classroom session. TIME and CONTENT may vary and be reduced based on Local Rules of Competition and/or transference to on-field education session(s) and class size.

1. Sign in, distribute Local Rules summaries, ensure each has a whistle and drop offs know when to be picked up. (Pre-class)
2. Introductions of Facilitator(s), overview of agenda, engage students by asking why the wish to try refereeing, any siblings or relatives who referee. The emphasis of this session should be that the referee's role re: make sure that **SAFETY, FAIRNESS, and FUN are priorities at all times in all decisions**, while also introducing their need to be responsible and accountable. (10 minutes)

All presentation of Laws will be via USSF Grade 9 PPT, supplemented by Local documents.

FIRST HALF- Pregame

3. Law 5 The Referee (45 minutes)- Referee DUTIES AND AUTHORITY- what must be done (field check for safety, player equipment check for safety, indicating restarts after stoppage, timekeeping, etc) and what MAY be done in the interest of safety and fairness, including stopping play for injuries, calling violations of the Laws, outside interference, etc. The sections on sanctions/discipline are not covered for this age level. Whistle use is demonstrated with emphasis on when/when not to use whistle.
4. Whistle practice (5 minutes) followed by break (5 minutes)
5. Law 7 Duration of the Match (10 minutes) – as dictated by Local Rules. Emphasis on knowing Local rules by age/grade group, and use of watch including remembering to start, to check, and knowing how to set before reaching the field.
6. Law 1 The Field (10 minutes)- as dictated by local rules and expected markings. Emphasis is identifying possible safety/playability issues and addressing with coaches before allowing match to start/continue. Proper terminology- touchline (not sideline) and goal line (not end line or base line).

7. Law 2 The Ball (5 minutes)- who supplies, how many, why the referee must check and approve, what to check (size, condition, inflation), how to check, managing replacement if needed.
8. Law 3 The Players (10 minutes)- max/min number on the field, substitution opportunities, control.
9. Law 4 The Players Equipment (15 minutes)- player requirements including jerseys, shorts, socks, shin guards, safe footwear. NO JEWELRY. Local exceptions to uniform requirements (may vary by age). How to manage issues by addressing with and through the coach, not the player or parent.
10. Whistle practice (5 minutes) followed by half time break (10 minutes)

SECOND HALF- In game/Post game

11. Laws 9 & 10 In and Out of Bounds/Method of Scoring (10 minutes)- emphasis on ball crossing (fully crossing) line to enter/leave field of play, and line extending to infinity above field. Demonstrate and review proper signal to indicate a goal. Whistle NOT required unless to stop play.
12. Law 8 Starts/Restarts (15 minutes)- administering the coin toss, changing direction for second half, administering the kick off including requirements of both teams in positioning, heavy emphasis on use of whistle to kick off and starting watch. Types of kick-off infractions and subsequent restart. When and how to administer a dropped ball, with infringements and restart. USSF includes a slide on the Concussion Initiative at this time. Cover briefly and indicate it will be covered under Law 12. Review/demonstrate signal for Indirect kick.
13. Law 15 Throw ins (10 minutes)- When to call- (ball completely over touch line)- What is proper signal- (facing touchline, arm raised at 45 degree angle in direction of throw)- use of whistle (none unless needed to stop continuing play or restart after substitution) – what are the 4 characteristics of a legal throw in? What are common reasons for an illegal (foul) throw? (lifting feet/jumping; one hand; not over the head; stepping on to the field). Restart after illegal throw (often dictated by local rules- may be loss of possession, may be on retake, may be multiple retakes). Goals may not be scored directly, result will be a goal kick or corner kick. Review required distance for defenders.
14. Law 16 The Goal Kick (10 minutes)- When to call (ball completely over goal line last touched by attacker but not a goal)- What is proper signal- (facing goal line, point with straight arm to goal line/box/area) Positioning requirements of opponents (build out/mid field line), when is ball in play (when it leaves the penalty area), what are violations (opponent encroachment, ball played before leaving penalty area) and restart (retake kick after explanation of violation to players).
15. Law 17 The Corner Kick (10 minutes)- When to call (ball completely over goal line, last touched by defender, but not a goal)- What is proper signal- (facing goal line, arm straight and raised at 45 degree angle to corner where kick is to be taken- do not cross arm over body, use arm on correct side). Review required distance for defenders, ball in play, common violations (double touch) and restart.

16. Review signals (5 minutes) and break (10 minutes).
17. Law 12 Fouls and Misconducts and Law 13 Free Kicks (20 minutes) - Review difference between foul (results in change of possession/restart) and misconduct (player disciplined but no change in possession/restart). Demonstrate difference by role play, same action ball in or out of play dictates. Review IDK fouls vs DK fouls- (IDK has no contact, impeding, most frequently dangerous play or goal keeper violation such as handling a pass or throw in from teammate, DK involves contact fouls plus handling/hand ball. Demonstrate same action by a player (high boot) may be no call (no opponent in area), IDK (opponent close but no contact) or DK (opponent struck by high boot). Very high-level discussion of yellow vs red card offenses, not usually applicable for this level but participants invariably want to know. Review signals and restarts.
18. Review Local Rules of Competition; Local Advice to Referees with emphasis on punctuality, appearance, preparedness, and professionalism; Administrative process document to cover how to get assignments, log games worked and communicate with TC via designated point of contact or assignor. (5 minutes)
19. Distribute Knowledge check- 25 TF questions- (10 minutes)
20. Review answers (Group review/discussion) (10 minutes.)
21. Closing- (5 minutes)- Wish them luck 😊