

Executive Committee

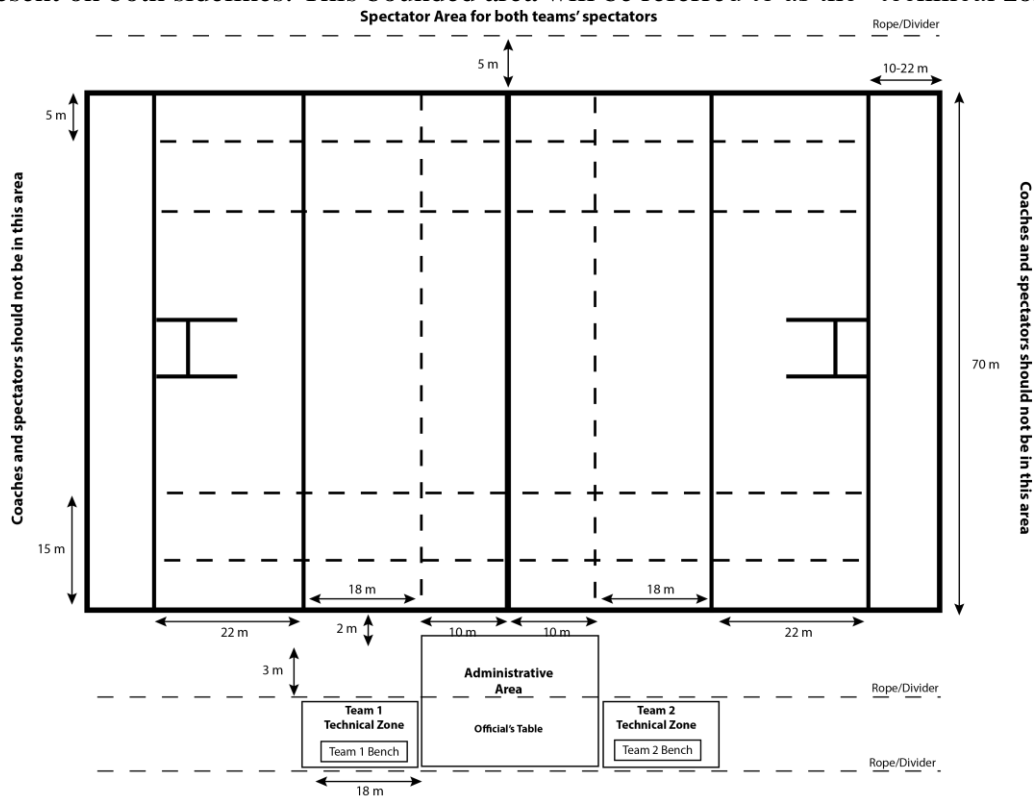
13 April 2022

Sideline Management (Referee Abuse) Guideline

Updated policy on referee abuse, effective 4.13.2022 until superseded.

In order to maximize safety and allow match officials to do their job unencumbered, the sideline must be kept clear. To that end, the following sideline policy has been established.

1. A sideline barrier will be set up for each URRS covered match. The barrier (e.g., rope) will be at least 5 meters from the sidelines and will extend from try line to try line. The barrier will be present on both sidelines. This bounded area will be referred to as the “technical zone”.



2. USA Rugby registered coaches will be allowed inside the technical zone.



3. Referee assessors, URRS, USAR and/or Tournament officials will also be allowed in the roped area, if the referee grants prior permission.

4. Team medical personnel or medical personnel available to all will be allowed within the roped area.

5. No players will be allowed within the roped area, except when being prepared as substitutes. Substitutes will be brought to the roped area near the assistant referee or touch judge. The assistant referee or touch judge will notify the referee at the next opportunity and the substitution will be made. Substitutes will not be allowed to warm up within the roped area.

6. Individuals allowed within the roped area must not obstruct or interfere with the assistant referee or touch judge or the ball in any way. Being allowed in this area is a privilege and not a right; those inside this area must respect the referee and the assistant referees or touch judges and not hamper their performance.

7. When a water opportunity comes up, water personnel will be allowed on the field as long as their presence doesn't interfere with a conversion kick. If the opportunity is the result of a try, the water personnel of the team scored upon will need to enter the field from behind the goal line after a try is awarded. Water personnel from the kicker's team may enter by the shortest means available.

8. At any time during the match: if a player goes down, designated medical personnel will be allowed on the field during play to attend to a fallen player. They will not need the referee's permission to enter the field, but it is their responsibility to avoid interfering with play. The referee may stop the game if play gets close to the injured player and/or the medical staff.

9. If any issue exists related to the above, the touch judge or assistant referee may signal the referee at any stoppage and explain the concern.

10. REFEREE ABUSE (from USAR, 10/21/2015)

All incidents of referee abuse, be it verbal, physical, or any other form of abuse, will be cited by the referee society to the relevant disciplinary committee using the formal citing process in place for the appropriate DC, usually those specified by World Rugby, and endorsed by USA Rugby. Verbal abuse by team coaches, team staff or team substitutes directed at match officials or players should not be tolerated and the following process should be followed:

- The referee will ask the identified person to refrain from their behavior.
- On the second occasion the referee will EJECT the person from the grounds.
- Zero tolerance approach should be applied and if the person refuses to leave, the referee should request that team's captain/coach to assist.

Failing compliance, the referee may abandon the match.

NOTE: The referee then restarts the game according to the latest stoppage and should NOT award a penalty due to the sideline behavior.

11. The referee will always have the right to supersede this policy in the interest of game and field management.

It is hoped that this policy will allow the referees, assistant referees, and touch judges to concentrate on the match in front of them and not be distracted by inappropriate sideline behavior.

In determining what action to take, the principles of law 9.8-10 shall be applied.

Where repeated infringements have been deemed to occur, the Referee Society shall, at their sole discretion, decline to require their members to referee matches involving that club (either home or away) for the remainder of the season. The Referee Society is not disciplining the club, simply declining to put their members into a hostile or dangerous environment. Such sanction will terminate at the end of the relevant season, or upon receipt from the club of evidence of practices put in place to reasonably ensure that the behavior will not recur.

For the purposes of administration, a 'club' is considered to be an entity registered as a club with USA Rugby's registration system.

12. Realizing that adequate reporting of incidents of abuse is dependent information provided by the appropriate match official so that the Disciplinary Committees can do their work with full information, match officials shall be required to report incidents of abuse in the Match Report Form.

a. Officials that supply inaccurate, misleading, or omitted information shall be subject to internal discipline by the Referee Society, including suspension from refereeing matches.

13. As a matter of practicality, any incidents that took place before April 13, 2022 are not subject to this policy update.

Approved: 4.13.2022