

## Referee Coronavirus Protocol – Game Day Protocols and Safety Plan - Match Officials (as of Jan. 31, 2021)

### **Summary of Protocols:**

Referees, you are responsible for only your behavior and should expect cooperation from all others. Follow local and state guidelines.

### **The Assignment:**

You are not required to accept any game.

Do not accept a game if you are experiencing any symptoms.

Let the Assignor know as soon as possible, especially if you accept, then need to decline (turnback).

Masks enforced under Law 4, Other Equipment.

### **Prior to the Game:**

Before leaving for the field, check yourself (see details below).

### **Pre-Game:**

Always maintain COVID-19 protocols (distance, touching, masks).

Arrive fully dressed.

Assistants bring your own flags if you have them.

Bring your own hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes.

MASKS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES – arrival, pre-game, during the game, halftime & after the game.

The field & equipment (including game balls) must be inspected per the notes below.

Rosters will be checked per the notes below.

No Coin Toss.

No “walkouts” or handshakes.

### **During the Game:**

Everyone, except players on the field, are 6 - 10 ft. from the touchline.

This is the responsibility of the coaches.

The Referee can end the match if he or she does not feel safe.

Try to maintain protocol distancing during the match.

Drop Ball & Penalty Kick – no referee handling.

Medical Situations – maintain distance.

**Halftime:**

Always maintain COVID-19 protocols (Distance, touching, masks).

Use hand sanitizer and sanitize all referee equipment again.

**After the Game:**

Always maintain COVID-19 protocols (Distance, touching, masks).

No handshakes, fist bumps, or high fives after the game.

If a coach's signature is required on the match report, maintain COVID-19 protocols, same if you need to leave a match report.

When debriefing with the referee crew, maintain COVID-19 protocols.

If working multiple games, wipe down and sanitize your equipment between your matches.

After the game is over and the crew has debriefed, leave the field.

If you encounter any difficulty implementing these protocols, complete a supplemental report and notify your Assignor.

**Detailed Protocols:****The Assignment:**

As an independent contractor you are not required to accept a game. It is your choice and you should take into consideration your comfort level.

Be conscious when accepting game assignments and do not accept a game if you are experiencing any symptoms.

If you decline a game, be respectful to the Assignor and notify her or him as soon as possible to allow time for a replacement.

If you start to exhibit symptoms after accepting a game, be in communication with your Assignor and consider if you should decline the game at that time.

If you are the Assignor, please be understanding if a referee declines a game due to health concerns.

**Prior to the Game:**

Before leaving for the field, referees should ask themselves the following questions:

Have you knowingly come into contact with anyone who has, is being tested for, or is exhibiting signs of coronavirus? (Yes or No)

Are you exhibiting any of the following symptoms which are not caused by any other condition? (Yes or No)

Fever or chills

Shortness of breath

Difficulty breathing

Fatigue

Muscle or body aches

Headache

New loss of taste or smell

Sore throat

Congestion or runny nose

Nausea or vomiting

Diarrhea

If the referee answers yes to any of these questions, he or she should notify the Assignor and refrain from officiating the game.

**Pre-Game:**

Personal Stations for referees

The referee crew should set up belongings in an area away from all others while maintaining 6-ft/2-yd space from each other.

Referees should not bring any unnecessary belongings to the field.

Referees are expected to arrive to the field fully dressed.

Gold referee jersey is the recommended color to avoid clashing.

If case of a conflict with the teams, alternate color jerseys should be on hand.

Assistant referees are expected to bring their own flags to the field. The flags don't need to match each other.

Referee equipment should not be shared, but if shared, it should be sanitized before and after the match.

Masks must be worn at all times – during pregame, game, half-time and after the game.

Referees should carry hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes for their own personal use.

Electronic whistles are recommended. Or, specially designed masks to allow for the use of regular whistles. The mask costs \$30.00, electronic whistles are \$15.00. You MUST have one or the other of these at the game.

During the referee crew pregame discussion, continue to maintain 6-ft/2-yd space and insure all COVID-19 protocols are discussed

**Field and Equipment Inspection:**

Field should still be walked. Visual inspection only of the goals, nets and flags.

If an item needs to be fixed or removed from the field, notify the home team as soon as possible

**Game balls:**

The Referee should inspect all game balls, but without handling them. For better efficiency, it is recommended there be more than one game ball.

**Player Check-In:****Rosters:**

If possible, try to receive the roster or match report electronically ahead of time.

If not, have the coach place the roster at the end of the bench to minimize close contact.

Leagues that require player passes, are pictures printed on the rosters? Then no need for player passes. If not, have the coach (or team manager) read the player passes.

Uniform/Jewelry checks – should be visual check only maintaining proper physical distance between Referee and players.

**Coin Toss:**

No coin toss.

While maintaining 6-ft space, the Home team picks direction to attack. Away team gets kick-off.

No player walkouts or handshakes prior to the game.

**During the Game:**

Technical Area (bench) and all others, COVID-19 protocol expects all players, team officials, and spectators to maintain at least a 6 - 10 ft. distance from the touchline, dependent on the facility.

This is NOT the referee crew's responsibility to maintain.

Communicate with the coaches if anyone is not maintaining the proper distance from the touchline.

If the problem persists, have a conversation with the full crew and both coaches to try to resolve the issue.

If at any time the referee crew does not feel safe during a match because proper distancing by spectators from the crew is not being followed, you can end the match due to safety concerns.

Try to maintain recommended distancing during the match.

Drop Ball – no Referee handling, ensure all except one player maintain a 4.5 yd. distance from the ball and restart with a whistle.

Penalty kicks – do not handle the ball. Place the ball on the mark, the player can then adjust.

**Medical Situations:**

Remain 6 ft. away from the injured player while determining if medical attention is needed.

If so, the team trainer or a coach from the player's team should attend to the injured player.

**Halftime:**

Masks should be worn during halftime.

Referees should maintain proper distancing during the halftime conversation.

It is recommended referees use hand sanitizer and sanitize all referee equipment again during halftime.

**After the Game:**

No handshakes, fist bumps, or high fives after the game. This can be replaced with a wave.

If a coach's signature is required on the match report, lay the report on the bench and back up, allowing for the coach to sign.

If you are required to leave a match report for the team(s), leave at the end of the team bench.

When debriefing with the referee crew, find a space where everyone can be seen and heard, while allowing for proper distancing.

If working multiple games, wipe down and sanitize your equipment between your matches.

Once the game is over and the crew has debriefed, leave the field. Do not congregate around the field.

Should you encounter any difficulty implementing these protocols, please complete a supplemental report and notify your Assignor.

Assignors, please notify the proper club administrators if a referee crew should encounter any problems implementing the protocols.

For contact tracing purposes, if a referee is to test positive for COVID after a match, they need to notify the Assignor immediately. The Assignor will be responsible for notifying the appropriate club official.