

Referee Training & Zero Tolerance Abuse Policy

REFEREE TRAINING

All FNL referees are required to attend training prior to the season start. This training is conducted by the FNL head referee or league commissioner. The training includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Concussion protocol
- 2) Who to notify if an injury stops the game
- 3) FNL rules review
- 4) Role playing abusive players/parents/coaches
- 5) Necessary equipment to referee
- 6) A multiple choice test to determine any gaps in training

If FNL receives a complaint about the referees, the commissioner and head referee discuss the complaint in detail following the Friday night games, which includes what game, what field, who were the referees, and what was the issue. If further investigation is required, the commissioner can contact the complaining person(s). The head referee can follow up with the referees to discuss the complaint and determine if there is a training issue. In some cases, if it is determined that the referee(s) are not competent, they will be dismissed. Weekly feedback is provided to all referees each week via email from the head referee. A referee incident reporting form can be found on our website, www.southocfnl.com, click on the Coaches Corner tab.

ZERO TOLERANCE REFEREE ABUSE POLICY

As stated in the FNL rules, unsportsmanlike conduct by anyone will not be tolerated. Any form of harassment, including hate speech or discriminatory remarks based on race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, disabilities, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. This protection extends to verbal attacks that would cause emotional harm to a reasonable person, approaching a referee when they arrive or depart the venue with aggression (e.g., intimidation), any form of cyberbullying, including spreading false information about the referee, sharing the referee's personal information (aka doxing), or publicly posting content that ridicules or mocks the referee or uses hate speech. Questioning the referee's character, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, or impartiality, yelling insults, taunting, making, or expressing derogatory/belittling remarks towards a referee, pervasive action that belittles or undermines the referee's authority or intended to cast doubt on the referee will not be tolerated. For the purposes of this policy, a referee, league commissioner or league representative is protected from these abuses.

If the field official/referee or commissioner witnesses **ANY** abusive act, the game will be stopped and the player/coach or fan may be ejected from the game. If ejected, the penalty for non-physical offenses (i.e. arguing, yelling, taunting, swearing) can range from a one game suspension, all the way to a full season suspension, depending on the severity of the abuse. The penalty for physical offenses (i.e. touching, pushing, grabbing, pulling, hitting, punching, kicking, etc) can range from multi-game suspensions to a lifetime ban. The league commissioner will determine the penalty.