



AYSO Region 1463 YOUTH REFEREE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

(a) Benefits to Youth Volunteers

The AYSO Region 1463 Youth Referee program provides youth volunteers with valuable benefits and life lessons.

The Youth volunteer program will help youths by:

- i. Increasing their interest in Soccer and helping to make new friends
- ii. Learning to become a role model
- iii. Earning respect
- iv. Earning Community Service hours (possible credit for High School and College)
- v. Learning decision making skills
- vi. Increasing their own pride and self confidence
- vii. Getting an early start on a refereeing career
- viii. Developing leadership and critical thinking skills
- ix. Learning the Laws of the Game and becoming better players as a result
- x. Becoming part of an exclusive group

(b) Benefits to the Region

In return AYSO 1463 will earn the following benefits in return. The Region will:

- i. Increase the referee pool
- ii. Gain more knowledgeable referees
- iii. Require less training in the basics
- iv. Gain potential long-term commitment
- v. Increase retention of players
- vi. Present good role models for others
- vii. Increase the quality of referees (players make good referees when well trained)

II. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

(c) Program Mentors

Program Mentors are designated by the Referee Administrator or Youth Program Coordinator.

The Mentor shall meet the following criteria:

- i. Is at a minimum a **certified Intermediate Referee** (no exceptions)
- ii. Has an up to date volunteer application with Region 1463

- iii. Possess the will and motivation to not only officiate games but to also teach and help build the youth referees in the program which would require more time out of the volunteer.
- iv. Is approved by both the Referee Administrator and the Youth Referee Program Coordinator.

(d) Youth Referee Program Divisions

- i. It is up to the Youth Referee Program coordinator to consult with the Regional Commissioner, the Coach Administrator and the Referee Administrator on which age divisions the program will cover.

III. ASSIGNING

Assigning can be done by the Referee Administrator or the Youth Referee Program Coordinator. It shall be done in advance to allow enough time for rescheduling conflicts.

- i. Assignments shall be sent to Parents and Youth Referees at a minimum of **one week in advance** to the Youth Referee Email Distribution list.
- ii. Youth Referees must be at least 2 years older than the age division of the match in question in order to either Referee or participate as an Assistant Referee.
- iii. Referees that cannot fulfill the assignment or have a last-minute emergency to where they cannot officiate the game shall immediately email, text, or call the Referee Administrator or the Youth Referee Program Coordinator.
- iv. 8U certified Youth Referees **CANNOT** be assigned as an AR or as Referee on 10U and above matches. The minimum badge level for this is Regional. This also means they cannot simply be “thrown on” a 10U match due to a missing AR. A club linesman will be appointed instead.

IV. TRAINING & ADVANCEMENT

(e) Training Sessions

- i. Training sessions should be held for the program. It is up to the Youth Referee Coordinator or the Mentor holding the training session to set the Date, Time, and Location.
 - a. Training sessions shall be sent out at a minimum of one week in advance to allow time for planning and rescheduling conflicts.
- ii. Training sessions **WILL NOT** be held in residential communities or in a home. It shall be held in community rented spaces approved by the Referee Administrator and the Regional Commissioner.

- iii. Training sessions are to **cover soccer related topics only**.
 - a. Training sessions can include field work, but any sort of physical conditioning can **ONLY** be administered if there is a certified AYSO coach or an active Board Member present.

V. MENTORSHIP

- i. **Mentors are approved and appointed by the Youth Referee Program Coordinator or the Referee Administrator.**
- ii. **It is ideal to have a mentor at every game observing and advising.**
 - a. The advisor/mentor can ensure there is a liaison between the youth and the adults on the field as well as provide encouragement and feedback about performance after the game.
 - b. A word or two from the advisor/mentor to coaches and even spectators prior to (or during) the game about the need to respect the “fully qualified” youth referees who have been assigned to the game may encourage more thoughtful consideration and support for the efforts of the young officials.
 - c. There is a **ZERO** tolerance policy for verbal or physical abuse towards a youth referee, violation of this policy will result in immediate removal from the field and or complex by the mentor or an active Board Member and **WILL** be reported to the Youth Referee Program Coordinator, the Coach Administrator, the Referee Administrator and the Regional Commissioner; absolutely **ZERO** exceptions. An **Incident Report** will be created and submitted to the Regional Commissioner in conjunction with this incident.
- iii. **Mentors will provide constructive criticism and feedback during halftime and after the game, this will help develop the referee they’re advising and add a sense of instruction.**
 - a. Mentors will receive training from the Referee Admin team on how to observe and assess a referee. In short, everybody will receive training.
- iv. **Mentors will not berate, insult, or bully a youth referee.**
 - a. Mistakes will be made, berating or scolding a youth referee will only discourage them from officiating games in the future, at the worst a mentor can be “firm but polite” on certain inconsistencies.
 - b. Mentors that are caught or reported to have bullied or insulted a youth referee will be dealt with by the Referee Admin team and may be barred from the program. An **Incident Report** will be created and submitted to the Regional Commissioner in conjunction with this incident.

VI. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

(f) Dealing with Difficult Spectators, Team Officials, or Coaches

- i. **It is up to the Region Board to make it clear at the Fall and Spring Coaches Meeting that youth referees are completely off limits and that the region will not tolerate any abuse of youth referees.**

Enlist the aid of the coaches to help educate parents and spectators about what is expected of them.

- a. We are all here to help each other out! Let's not forget that.
- b. Again **ZERO** tolerance policy for abuse towards a youth referee.

VII. YOUTH REFEREE COMPETITIONS

- i. **The Youth Referee Program Coordinator may set up Referee Competitions:**
 - a. These should be modeled after the Ken Aston Cup where teams of referees compete against one another to determine which team best represents AYSO refereeing. The teams are assessed, and allocated points based upon established criteria.
 - b. A youth referee competition is valuable and an exciting way of stimulating the interest and improving the performance of young referees.
- ii. **Giveaways must be approved by the Regional Commissioner**
 - a. There are certain guidelines for using the region budget to purchase giveaways for region competitions. The Regional Commissioner shall receive a plan that includes prices and quantities and will have overall approval of the purchase.
- iii. **Competition teams must have an Adult Contact (Team Parent)**
 - a. All teams **MUST** have an adult contact (Team Parent) who will act as the liaison between the team and the competition.
 - b. Competing referees must be between the ages of 12 and 16. Applicants aged 17 and 18 will be accepted but cannot win the Competition. The older applicants will receive the benefit of assessments from trained assessors and the participation awards.
- iv. Overall the competition will need to be written up and demonstrated to the Region 1463 Board for approval. The demonstration must also include who the assessors will be and how the method of scoring will work.