

## **IFAB Laws of the Game Changes 2019/2020**

WRITTEN BY IFAB

The following summarizes the main Law changes for 2019/20:

### **Substitutes - Law 3 [The Players]**

#### **Changes**

A player who is being substituted must leave the field by the nearest point on the touchline/goal line (unless the referee indicates the player can leave quickly/immediately at the halfway line or a different point because of safety, injury etc.).

### **Players' Equipment - Law 4 [The Players' Equipment]**

#### **Changes**

Multi-colored/patterned undershirts are allowed if they are the same as the sleeve of the main shirt.

### **Team Officials - Laws 5 [The Referee] & 12 [Fouls and Misconduct]**

#### **Changes**

A team official guilty of misconduct will be shown a YC (caution)\* or RC (sending-off)\*; if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach who is in the technical area at the time will receive the YC/RC\*. Law 12 will have a list of YC/RC offences.

### **Medical Breaks - Law 7 [The Duration of the Match]**

#### **Changes**

Difference between 'cooling' breaks (90 seconds – 3 minutes) and 'drinks' breaks (max 1 minute).

### **Kick-Off - Law 8 [The Start and Restart of Play]**

## **Changes**

The team that wins the toss can now choose to take the kick-off or which goal to attack (previously they only had the choice of which goal to attack).

### **Dropped ball - Laws 8 [The Start and Restart of Play] & 9 [The Ball in and out of Play]**

## **Changes**

If play is stopped inside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for the goalkeeper.

If play is stopped outside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the point of the last touch.

In all cases, all the other players (of both teams) must be at least 4m (4.5yds) away from the spot of the ball drop.

If the ball touches the referee (or another match official) and goes into the goal, team possession changes or a promising attack starts, a dropped ball is awarded.

### **Goal Celebrations - Law 12 [Fouls and Misconduct]**

## **Changes**

A YC for an 'illegal' celebration (e.g. removing the shirt) remains even if the goal is disallowed.

### **Handball - Law 12 [Fouls and Misconduct]**

## **Changes**

Deliberate handball remains an offence.

The following 'handball' situations, even if accidental, will be a free kick:

The ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand/arm;

A player gains control/possession of the ball after touches their hand/arm and then scores, or creates a goal-scoring opportunity;

The ball touches a player's hand/arm which has made their body unnaturally bigger;

The ball touches a player's hand/arm when it is above their shoulder (unless the player has deliberately played the ball which then touches their hand/arm).

The following will not usually be a free kick, unless they are one of the above situations:

The ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from their own head/body/foot or the head/body/foot of another player who is close/near;

The ball touches a player's hand/arm which is close to their body and has not made their body unnaturally bigger;

If a player is falling and the ball touches their hand/arm when it is between their body and the ground to support the body (but not extended to make the body bigger);

If the goalkeeper attempts to 'clear' (release into play) a throw-in or deliberate kick from a teammate but the 'clearance' fails, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball.

Having the hand/arm above shoulder height is rarely a 'natural' position and a player is 'taking a risk' by having the hand/arm in that position, including when sliding

If the ball comes off the player's body, or off another player (of either team) who is close by, onto the hands/arms it is often impossible to avoid contact with the ball

When the GK clearly kicks or tries to kick the ball into play, this shows no intention to handle the ball so, if the 'clearance' attempt is unsuccessful, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball without committing an offence

## **Quick Free Kick and YC/RC - Law 12 [Fouls and Misconduct]**

### **Changes**

If the referee is about to issue a YC/RC but the non-offending team takes the free kick quickly and creates a goal-scoring opportunity, the referee can delay the YC/RC until the next stoppage if the offending team was not distracted by the referee.

## **Free Kicks - Law 13 [Free Kicks]**

### **Changes**

When there is a 'wall' of three or more defenders, the attackers are not allowed within 1m (1 yd) of the wall; an attacker less than 1m (1yd) from the 'wall' when the kick is taken will be penalized with an indirect free kick.

When the defending team takes a free kick in their own penalty area, the ball is in play once the kick is taken; it does not have to leave the penalty area before it can be played. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area and at least 9.15m away until the ball is in play. The same change has been made to the goal kick (see Law 16).

### **Penalty Kick - Law 14 [The Penalty Kick]**

#### **Changes**

The team's penalty taker can have (quick) treatment/assessment and then take the kick.

The goalkeeper must not be touching the goalposts/crossbar/nets; they must not be moving.

The goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line when the kick is taken; cannot stand behind the line. Goalkeepers are not permitted to stand in front of or behind the line.

### **Goal Kick - Law 16 [The Goal Kick]**

#### **Changes**

The ball is in play once the kick is taken; it can be played before leaving the penalty area. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.