

# Highland Soccer League CODE OF CONDUCT

The goal of the Highland Soccer League (HSL) is to promote fair and equal play, and encourage positive parental and spectator involvement, and abuse of game officials cannot be tolerated. While there is not a widespread problem, the goal of a Code of Conduct is to have clear guidelines and understanding for team officials, parents, spectators, and officials in order to deal with any situation that may arise.

**All persons responsible for a team and all spectators shall only display positive communication and encouragement toward players, coaches, and other spectators.**

**All persons responsible for a team and all the spectators shall support the referee, other participants, and other spectators.**

Consequently, the HSL has adopted the following rules:

**Spectators will be expected to only encourage and cheer players on both teams in a positive manner.**

**No one is to address the referee during the game, with the exceptions as listed in this Code of Conduct.**

---

## Code of Conduct Details

### Persons Responsible for a team (Coach & Managers)

#### Exceptions:

During the Game:

- Responding to a referee initiating a communication
- Making Substitutions
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues.

At half-time or at the end of the game:

- A coach/manager can ask a referee to explain rules in a polite and constructive way.
- A polite and friendly feedback can be given to a referee
- Absolutely NO sarcasm, harassment and intimidation.

#### Penalties:

In all cases where this policy is not followed, the game official will report the incident to the referee association, who will bring the incident to the attention of the League and District.

The following penalties will also be issued based on severity and frequency of the violation.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Minor Infraction - Referee should ignore
- 1<sup>st</sup> Serious Infraction - Caution or Ejection depending on seriousness of infraction (FIFA).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Minor Infraction - A verbal warning shall be given
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Infraction - Caution
- 4<sup>th</sup> Infraction - Ejection

In situations where coaches feel that rules are not being applied by the referee, they should discuss it with the referee at halftime or at the end of the game in a polite and constructive manner. Should agreement to change not be reached, the coach must abide by the rules that the referee applies. If the referee appears to be in conflict, the coach should report the incident as outlined later in this Code of Conduct.

**COACHES MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE REFEREE HAS THE RIGHT TO WALK AWAY FROM A GAME AT ANY POINT SHOULD HE/SHE FEEL THAT RULES AND DECISIONS ARE NOT BEING ADHERED TO.**

---

## Spectators

### Exceptions:

During the Game:

- Referee initiating a communication.
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues.

At half-time or at the end of the game

- none

### Penalties:

In all cases where this code of conduct is not followed, the game official will report the incident to the referee association, who will bring the incident to the attention of the League and District.

The following penalties will also be issued based on severity and frequency of the violation.

- 1<sup>st</sup> infraction - Referee should stop the game and ask the coach to quiet the offending spectator.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Infraction - A verbal warning. The referee should stop the game and ask the coach to warn the spectator that the next infraction will be an ejection or the referee will abandon the game.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Infraction - The referee shall instruct the coach to direct the spectator to leave the field. The referee should abandon the game if the spectator does not leave the field.

In situations where coaches, players, or spectators feel the spirit of this code is not being followed, and the situation is not addressed by the referee, they should report the incident as outlined later in this Code of Conduct.

---

## Referees-Game Officials

Soccer officials in Nova Scotia are all registered members of local referee associations as well as Soccer Nova Scotia Referee Association. This membership includes the obligation to abide all referee policies contained in the Soccer Nova Scotia Policies and Procedures.

Should team officials, participant, or spectators feel that an official is in violation of good conduct, they should contact the HSL administrator and file an official complaint.

Such complaints must include date, location, and time of the competition where the alleged violation took place, and a detailed description of the incident, including any other potential witness names and contact information.

ALL SUCH INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED IN CONFIDENCE, BUT THE COMPLAINANT MAY BE REQUIRED TO APPEAR BEFORE A HEARING COMMITTEE AT SOME FUTURE DATE.