



Midwest District 5 National 1 League (N1)
Referee Guidelines
Fall 2026

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Important Websites: <https://www.michiganyouthsoccer.org/national1/>

League rules - <https://national1league.org/about/rules-handbook/>

Unique Rules

- **NO PLAYERS MAY BE WRITTEN IN ON MATCH DAY ROSTER**
- Up to 30 primary (P) players may be rostered. Unlimited Club Pass (CP) players on roster. **Only 18 players are match day eligible.** Cross off all non-eligible players.
- Only 4 ECNL RL (CP) players may be played per N1 match. These players should have a ECNL RL passcard.

Age	Match length	Fees	Payment (cash)
U13	Two 35-min halves	\$70/\$50/\$50	Each team pays 1/2
U14	Two 35-min halves	\$70/\$50/\$50	Each team pays 1/2
U15	Two 40-min halves	\$80/\$55/\$55	Each team pays 1/2
U16	Two 40-min halves	\$80/\$55/\$55	Each team pays 1/2
U17	Two 45-min halves	\$90/\$60/\$60	Each team pays 1/2
U18/19	Two 45-min halves	\$90/\$60/\$60	Each team pays 1/2

Notes:

1. If an official does not honor their assignment, their fees are **returned** to the teams.
Referees do not collect additional fees.
2. All half time periods are 10-minutes.

Substitution Rules:

Substitutions may be made at any stoppage with the approval of the referee. Any substitution during play is considered a moment regardless of the opponent's substitution.

- **5.7.1. U13-14.** Unlimited over three (3) moments in **each half** plus halftime.
- **5.7.2. U15-18/19.** Unlimited over four (4) moments **per match** plus halftime.
 - a) Yes, players may reenter within the same half.
- **5.7.4. Coaches may not agree to changes to the substitution policy.**

Checking in Teams:

- Electronic passes are acceptable check in procedure.
- **Players and coaches who do not have a passcard will not be permitted to participate in a National 1 match.**
- **Make sure that you VERIFY coaches passcards.**

Spectator and technical areas:

- 6.6.1. All coaches, players, and spectators will remain eighteen (18) yards from the goal lines.
- 6.6.2. Where possible, coaches and players are to take opposite sides of the field from the spectators.
- 6.6.3. No coaching, either from a coach or spectator, may take place within 18 yards from the goal line or from behind the goal lines.
- 6.6.4. All coaches and spectators shall remain at least two yards from the touchline.

Banned words: An automatic red card shall be given when a member of the referee crew hears one of the following banned words, regardless of language in which it is expressed.

National 1 Banned Words List (non-exhaustive)

B*tt* Boy	D*ck	K*ke	Rag He*d
Be*ner	F*g	Mar*con	R*tard/R*tarded
Black Boy/Girl	F*ggot	N*gger/N*gga	Sl*nt

Ch*nk	G*y	N*egro	Sp*c
Cr*cker	H*mo	P*to	Wetb*ck
C*nt	Jewb*y	P*ssy	White Boy/Girl

A supplemental report is required should one of these terms be used. Do not use abbreviations. Attempt to capture the language as expressed.

What if a player alleges that an opponent used a banned word?

- Immediately stop the match
- Bring both coaches together (at least one AR should be part of this discussion), and share with them what was said, to whom.
- Direct coaches to address their teams and share that if heard, it will be an immediate red card, and to direct their players from using these banned terms
- Resume play as soon as possible, add stoppage time.

Reporting Scores

- The entire referee crew should sign AFTER it all match details have been confirmed. The Team Manager or Coach are responsible for reporting scores and uploading the match report. Take a picture of the report after both coaches have signed. Make sure to verbally report the scores, send off, and misconducts to ensure that there is no error.

Dealing with spectators

The IFAB Laws of the game do not afford an official with sanctioning spectators. If a spectator uses threatening or abusive language to an official or a player,

- Stop the match, send all players to their technical area
- Inform the coach that a spectator **MUST** be removed. Tell them exactly what was said.
- If the coach refuses to deal with the situation, the match can be abandoned if the referee crew is concerned about their (or player) safety.
- Submit a written report.

Red cards:

- **Submit a written supplemental report the report within 24 hours to fvillachico@gmail.com.**
 - The pdf writeable report is available upon request. Request a report from by sending an email to: fvillachico@gmail.com

Examples of writing a red card report are provided below.

Serious Foul Play (SFP)

“In the 51’ minute of the match, Sporting Kansas City player #9 Kriztian Nemeth was shown the red card and sent off for serious foul play. Nemeth challenged Vancouver’s #8 Felipe for the ball, while using excessive force with a straight leg, lunging tackle, studs exposed- which contacted the lower part of the shin, endangering the safety of the opponent. Nemeth left the field of play in a timely manner, without causing any further incidents.”

Violent Conduct (VC)

“In the 93’ minute of the match, Orlando City player #14 Dom Dwyer was shown the red card and sent off for violent conduct. Play was stopped after Dwyer used his elbow to forcefully strike Columbus Crew’s #3 Josh Williams in the head (who was seriously injured on the play and did not return to the match). Dwyer did not leave the field in a timely manner, which caused further mass confrontation.”

2nd Caution

“In the 69’ minute of the match, Colorado’s #9 Caleb Calvert was shown the red card and sent off for receiving a second caution in the same match. Calvert received his first caution (for dissent) in the 67’ minute, and the second caution (for entering the field of play without the referee’s permission) in the 69’. Calvert left the field of play in a timely manner, without causing any further incidents.”

DOGSO-hand

“In the 75’ minute of the match, Seattle’s #26 Casey Murphy was shown the red card and sent off for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity. Murphy was outside of her penalty area and was the last defender and used her hands to stop a shot toward the goal. Murphy left the field of play in a timely manner, without causing any further incident.

DOGSO-foul

“In the 60th minute of the match, LAG #22 Leonardo was shown the red card and sent off for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity by foul, with no attempt to play the ball. The offence occurred inside the penalty area approximately 8 yards from goal, where Leonardo pulled down FC Dallas’ Blas Perez from behind, to prevent Perez’s imminent goal scoring opportunity. Leonardo left the field of play with no further incidents and play was restarted with a penalty kick.

BANNED WORDS

In the 72nd minute of the match, Chivas #42 Juan Dum was shown a red card for screaming at Puma #27 Emanuel Nada *Shut the f*ck up or I'll kick you're a*s in the parking lot.*” Dum was shown a red card and left the field without further incident and play was restarted with a dropped ball.