

U.S. Soccer recently announced a new **Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP)** policy that sets minimum expectations for suspensions for individuals who violate the policy. With this policy now in effect for all member organizations of U.S. Soccer, this will apply to all affiliated matches you are officiating.

If you've not previously learned about the new **Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP)** policy, you can read about it [here](#).

As the governing bodies of soccer at all levels in the United States implement this new policy, please keep the following in mind:

- **The Laws of the Game have not changed**, just the suspension required by U.S. Soccer for infractions of the Referee Abuse policy.
- **Do not change the way you officiate a game as a result of this policy.**
- Continue to utilize the techniques taught by U.S. Soccer and CNRA to proactively manage behavior from the coaches, players and spectators to prevent the need for misconduct. You can learn more about those techniques [here](#).
- Review the examples of behaviors outlined in the policy to re-evaluate the kinds of behaviors that warrant a response of some kind from the referee.

The intent of this policy is **not** to see a significant increase in red cards for things that have not been red cards in the past. The goal is to create stronger consequences to prevent the behavior from happening. However, the examples found in this policy, particularly under Level 1 of the non-physical section, should make us all re-evaluate the kinds of behaviors we should be flagging as inappropriate or worthy of an appropriate response of some kind from the referee. The examples provided in Levels 2-4 of the non-physical section and the entire physical section should result in a red card to the guilty party, as they have in the past.

U.S. Soccer is currently developing a reporting structure to be used nationwide when this policy is violated. Until that national reporting process is in place, please follow the instructions below when this policy is violated in a game:

- The referee of the match should complete the standard red card reporting process, and submit any reporting to the governing body of the match (i.e. NorCal, Cal North, etc.). This is the same process that would be followed when any red card is issued.
 - This form should be submitted even if a red card was not issued during a game in which a violation of the Referee Abuse policy occurred.
- Any red card report or Supplemental Report submitted for a violation of the Referee Abuse policy should also be sent to CNRA. Simply email a PDF of the report to rapreport@cnra.net.
 - Note: this is only for red cards issued for referee abuse as described in the U.S. Soccer policy.
 - Exception: NorCal will automatically forward reports from NorCal matches, so the referee does not need to email CNRA a copy.

Referee Abuse Policy (RAP)

March 2025



To learn more about the implementation of this new **Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP)** policy, we encourage you to join us for one of the following RAP informational webinars where this will be discussed in detail:

- [Thursday, March 6 – 7pm](#)
- [Monday, March 10 – 7pm](#)
- [Monday, March 17 – 7pm](#)

Additionally, CNRA will dedicate the two Continuing Education webinars in March to the topic of “Managing Dissent”, so we can refresh our memories on the techniques you can use to manage the behavior of coaches, players and spectators:

- [Wednesday, March 19 – 7pm](#)
- [Wednesday, March 26 – 7pm](#)

If you have any questions specific to the implementation of this policy, or if you need support in addressing any issues that arise as this policy is initiated, please email rap@cnra.net and CNRA staff will get back to you as soon as possible.

As always, we appreciate your partnership and look forward to working with you as we navigate the implementation of this new policy.