

## Greater Longview Soccer Association Zero Tolerance Explained

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Greater Longview Soccer Association (GLSA) is to foster and advance soccer programs that promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, and courage through athletic competition. GLSA's mission is to provide a safe, clean, and wholesome environment for the children and parents of GLSA to enjoy the game of soccer.

It is the responsibility of ALL coaches, players, and parents to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players, and supporters before, during, and after all games. Abusive, confrontational and obscene language, violent play/conduct, fighting, inciting, escalating and other behavior detrimental to individuals, the game, and the sport will not be tolerated.

A coach, player, and parent's responsibility for referee support and spectator control includes the times prior to, during, and after the game at the field and surrounding area. All persons responsible for a team and all spectators shall support the referees always. Failure to do so will undermine the referee's authority and has the very real potential of creating a hostile environment for the players, the referee, and all other participants and spectators.

### **Coaches (Includes all coaches on the roster)**

It is the responsibility of all coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players, and supporters in all games. Failure to do so undermines the integrity of the game and the referee's authority and can result in a hostile environment for the players, the referee(s), coaches, assistant coaches, and spectators.

As role models for all the participants and spectators, coaches participating in GLSA-sanctioned events are expected to be supportive of, and to acknowledge the effort, good play, and sportsmanship on the part of ALL players from either team in a game. They are expected to show by example that while competing, they have a respect for their opponent, referees, and spectators always.

All members of GLSA (parents and players) shall support the volunteer coaches. Failure to do so undermines the position of the coach, the support of other members, the direction of GLSA, and jeopardizes the value that volunteers provide to players, parents, and spectators.

Any concern that an individual has with a coach or assistant coach can be directed in a polite and constructive manner to a board member at the convenience of the board member or directly to the President of the association.

In addition, any member of GLSA is welcome to address the board during a regularly scheduled monthly meeting, provided a minimum of three (3) days' notice is given in writing to the association President. Depending on the nature of the concern, the association and its board members have the right to delay the hearing as deemed necessary; for example, if an investigation is required.

Any contact with a coach or assistant coach, on or off the field of play, by phone, email, in person, etc., considered verbally or physically abusive, insulting, or threatening will be considered for disciplinary action through an A&D hearing led by the A&D Chairman and appointed committee. The A&D committee shall determine the necessary disciplinary action.

## Referees

All persons, coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, spectators, and players shall support the referee team. Failure to do so undermines the referee's authority and potentially creates a hostile environment for the players, referees, and all other participants and spectators.

Any concern that an individual has with a referee or referee team can be directed in a polite and constructive manner directly to the President of the Referee Association, the boys' or girls' Director, or the President of GLSA.

Any contact with any referee, on or off the field of play, by phone, email, in person, etc., considered verbally or physically abusive, insulting, or threatening will be considered for disciplinary action through an A&D hearing led by the A&D Chairman and appointed committee. The A&D committee shall determine the necessary disciplinary action.

## Communication with Referees

The following policy, exceptions, and penalty procedures apply to all outdoor recreational soccer matches officiated at any location under the authority of GLSA or North Texas Soccer Association (NTSSA). This policy applies to home and away games.

### Policy

**No one is to address the referees during the match.**

### Exceptions for the coaches

During the match

Responding to a referee who initiates communication

Asking for a substitution

Pointing out emergencies or safety issues

At halftime or end of match

A coach may ask a referee to explain a rule or ruling in a **polite and constructive manner. This is not an invitation to debate!**

Polite and friendly feedback can be given to a referee

Absolutely NO sarcasm, harassment, or intimidation

### Penalties

The referee or referee team shall have full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game concerning penalties for noncompliance with the communication policy.

### Exceptions for spectators

During the match

Referee initiates communication

Pointing out emergencies or safety issues

### Penalties

The referee or referee team shall have full authority to enforce the following penalties for noncompliance with the communication policy:

1<sup>st</sup> infraction: Referee shall stop the match and ask the coach to quiet the offending spectator.  
2<sup>nd</sup> infraction: Verbal warning. Referee shall stop the match and ask the coach to warn the offending spectator that the next infraction will result in the offending spectator's ejection and the GLSA Zero Tolerance Policy will be invoked, which means the corresponding player is suspended until the offending spectator pays a \$50.00 cash fine. A misconduct report will be written and submitted to A&D.

If a coach and/or spectator fail to comply with an ejection, then the referee shall abandon the match resulting in a forfeit for the responsible team. The ejected coach and/or spectator shall be out of sight and sound. When a spectator is ejected, the coach shall assist in providing the name of the spectator and corresponding player to the referee.

**Note:**

If you as a spectator or coach, or an attending family member/friend are asked to leave the complex at any time during a GLSA-sanctioned event by a GLSA commissioner, board member, or head official because of conduct, then your player will be suspended until the offending spectator/coach pays a \$50.00 cash fine to GLSA.

It is important to remember the seriousness of the infraction is solely the opinion of the referee responsible for the match. There is no questioning of a Caution (yellow card) or Send Off (red card) at the field to the center referee, field marshal, or GLSA board member. The only avenue for appeal is a properly constituted A&D hearing conducted according to GLSA and/or NTSSA playing rules or bylaws. All appeals must be filed in writing with the appropriate commissioner within 48 hours of the incident, excluding Sunday. The written appeal should clearly state the incident involved and the actions of each coach and team referee to the extent that they are involved in the protest. A fee of \$100.00 cash must accompany all appeals. If the A&D committee uphold the appeal, then the fee is returned. If the appeal is denied, then the fee will be forfeited to the association Treasurer.

**Note to referees**

Any caution or send off requires a signed GLSA/NTSSA Outdoor Misconduct Report detailing the incident. Include just the facts. Note what was said verbatim, especially if the language is profane, foul, or threatening. In cases where the referee abandons a match, the proper league or association authority **ONLY** can determine the status of the match.

**Note to board members**

If a GLSA board member witnesses inappropriate or violent behavior by a coach, assistant coach, team manager, spectator, player, or referee, then he/she is encouraged to inform the offender the he/she must adhere to the GLSA Zero Tolerance Policy or leave the premises. If the behavior continues, the GLSA board member should send a report to the A&D Chairman and Director of Referees for further review. This will aid the association in protecting all referees, especially our younger referees who might feel intimidated applying reprimands to adults.

