



METRO DC – VIRGINIA STATE REFEREE PROGRAM

TO: All Members of the Metro DC – Virginia State Referee Program (MDCVASRP)

FROM: MDCVASRP State Referee Committee

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Referees Officiating Sanctioned Soccer Matches for the Remainder of 2020

All;

The Metro DC - Virginia Referee Committee suggests the following guidelines for officiating soccer games, once games are allowed by local authorities. First and foremost, you should always follow Virginia, and local health department orders and recommendations. This is not legal or medical advice. For your own protection and the protection of your family on your return home, understand the healthcare advice and apply it to your personal health and family circumstances.

1. Officiating is a personal choice and you should feel comfortable determining for yourself if you would like to resume officiating activities.
2. If you are sick or have symptoms of an illness – STAY HOME and do not accept the assignment. If you have accepted an assignment and become sick, have symptoms, or have been exposed to someone who has or is suspected of having COVID-19 prior to the assignment, contact the assignor as soon as possible and turn back the match. You will not be penalized for it, but please out of respect for the game and the players do not wait until the last minute to inform the assignor.
3. Referees do not have additional responsibilities or authority under the COVID-related return to play guidelines from the Commonwealth of Virginia, US Soccer, VYSA, or MDCVSA. If a competition has a different set of requirements with your assignor, they should let you know when giving you the assignment. At the field, refer questions to coaches or competition administrators. Links to current applicable guidelines are:
 - a. <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Forward-Virginia-Phase-Three-Guidelines.pdf>
 - b. <https://www.ussoccer.com/playon/guides/phase-2-grassroots>
4. Stay healthy. Please accept games within your fitness level, skill, and availability. For many reasons, related and unrelated to COVID, there are fewer referees this season.
5. Assignors will have a tougher year, and hopefully all leagues will be more sensitive and accommodating.
6. Take and use hand sanitizer. Take a mask. Use the mask in crowds before and after the game.
7. Set your bags, chairs, and drinks six feet apart and away from the spectators and the teams. For example, unless you have a full size 20-yard technical area, do not set up between the teams or near the water.



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8. When conducting the pre-game and half-time discussions, adhere to the Virginia Commonwealth's physical distancing guidelines as much as possible and stay TEN FEET apart from your crew.
9. Do not shake hands or bump fists with players, coaches, spectators, or other referees. This year, smile, nod, wish them a good game, applaud, or wave. MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCING OF TEN FEET.
10. If asked or necessary, remind spectators to stay at least 10 feet behind the touchlines.
11. If needed, locate the benches and mark the technical areas. The benches should be at least 10 feet from the sideline. Call the coach's attention to the mark and the special COVID requirement for the coach/team to be more than six feet from the AR.
12. Remind coaches and players at the beginning of the match to follow the rules of the competition about social distancing in team areas and at goal celebrations.
13. Pre-game player/team checks and coin toss should be per local competition rules as usual. REMEMBER PHYSICAL DISTANCING OF TEN FEET.
14. Seldom does play bring a referee within six feet of a player for long. Keep explanations simple and short. Prolonged exposure increases risks of COVID-19 spread. Evaluate possible injuries, show cards, and explain from TEN FEET.
15. Referee evaluations of injuries or other discussions with players, fans, or coaches should be concise and as short as possible. MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCING OF TEN FEET! "Data are insufficient to precisely define the duration of time that constitutes a prolonged exposure. Recommendations vary on the length of time of exposure, but 15 min of close exposure can be used as an operational definition." (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>). There are so many factors that we cannot give guidance on a specific time of exposure.
16. Apply and enforce the IFAB Laws of the Game and the rules of the competition with more physical distance than last season. Do NOT make up rules that are not part of the LOTG or competition rules.
17. Always apply the TEN FEET physical distance and LESS TIME EXPOSURE when officiating a match.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
MDCVASRP State Referee Committee