



MATCH OFFICIALS GUIDELINES

TO REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19 SPREAD

May 17, 2021

***In effect until further notice**

Game Rules will follow the FIFA Laws of the Game except for those laws below which have been modified to reduce physical contact during training and games in order to reduce the risk of Covid-19 spread.

Laws of the Game Adjustments:

- Drop ball: The drop ball requirement has been removed to reduce handling of the ball and has been converted to an indirect free kick. If the drop ball is inside the penalty area after hitting the Referee, the ball automatically goes to the Goalkeeper - the Referee leaves the ball on the ground, and the Goalkeeper picks it up.
- Coin toss: No coin toss. The Home team chooses, every game, at every level.

Discipline Adjustments:

- Automatic cautions for any players who are involved in face-to-face (but non-mass confrontation) confrontations. Jostling and 'fighting' for space will result in a straight Yellow Card for Unsporting Behaviour.
- Physical altercations "away from the ball" will result in an automatic **suspension from the match**. *eg. two players come together and push each other * A suspension from the match does not put a team down a player.
- Players should refrain from spitting on the field. If a player spits on the field, the referee will issue a verbal warning. If the player spits a second time it will also result in an automatic **suspension from the match**.

* The suspension from the match is used to discipline a player for infractions as they pertain to Modified Rules which under normal circumstances does not warrant a caution or ejection.

The procedure to suspend a player from the match is simply to identify the player and verbally advise that they are being removed from the match for an infraction of the Modified Rules. The player is not red carded and the suspension from the current match does not impact their ability to play in future matches.

Process Adjustments:

- The Thunder and Lightning Policy will be adjusted to read that if the game is stopped for severe weather, then the **game is over** in order to avoid gathering of participants in confined areas.
- Match Officials must come dressed in appropriate gear to the game/training as dressing rooms are closed during this stage.
- With modified games, field marshals are to be appointed to ensure compliance with social distancing rules and safety protocols. The field marshal should be a recognized authority within the soccer team. This is not the role of Match Officials.
- It is recommended that when travelling together to games, maximum in a car is two individuals; one in the front seat and one in the back seat.
- When a player is injured, Match Officials may only observe and refer assistance to the applicable team bench. There is to be no Match Official contact with the player. Only team personnel, following proper health and safety protocols may assist the injured player.
- There will be no handshakes or high 5's between players, match officials, coaches before, during or after the game.
- Parents are not permitted to enter the playing field at the end of game or during training. If this occurs, it is an expectation that the team coach/field marshal will address with the parent(s).
- When Match Officials are taking part in practical training sessions, they must follow PEI Soccer Return to Play as well as the Province of PEI health and safety guidelines.

Vision: Creating a lifelong passion for soccer.

- All cash/cheque payment to Match Officials at games must be in an envelope/sealed bag.
- Parents/Guardians of youth Match Officials are considered general spectators, therefore at any facility, they must adhere to social distancing rules and all other health and safety protocols. Parents of Match Officials are not permitted to enter the field of play at any time (before, during or after games).
- Match Official assessors and mentors need to respect social distancing guidelines. These activities should take place away from the spectator side of the field of play.
- No goal celebrations are permitted which incorporates physical touching. Verbal warnings will be issued. - Players should retrieve out of play balls using only their feet. Teams must have a second game ball ready if a ball cannot be retrieved with the feet. It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure the balls are properly inflated. The other ball will be retrieved and disinfected, by the home team, before being used again.
- Postgame discussions between the officiating crew must respect social distancing rules.
- Where applicable, team physiotherapy should be set up at the end of the team benches towards the corner flags. This provides more space in the middle for the 4th Match Official and game announcer/convenor.
- It is recommended that Match Officials take the necessary safety precautions to limit the risk of infection for themselves. Use hand sanitizer upon arrival, when entering and leaving the field of play and before and after handling the game sheet.

Safety Adjustments:

- Match Officials to regularly complete the COVID-19 Self-Assessment.
 - *If showing symptoms of Covid-19, contact assignor and cancel your assignment and call 811.
- Match Officials to thoroughly wash equipment, towels, clothes, bags, water bottles, and other items after use.
- Individuals to bring a full personal use water bottle(s) and avoid touching or using public water fountains.
- Assistant Referees must provide their own flags.
- Do not share pens, cards etc.
- Consider wearing a mask when you are not officiating.
- Wash hands prior to leaving for games; bring personal use hand sanitizer to the fields.
- It is recommended that gloves are worn to the field and individuals avoid touching gates, fences, benches, etc.
- After games and at half time, limit your distance to two (2) meters (6 feet) from others.
- No contact with others, such as hand shaking, fist bumps and high fives.
- Leave the field as soon as reasonably possible after training or games.
- Avoid post training/game socializing as much as possible.
- Match Officials have the right to abandon any game where the required COVID-19 protocols are not being followed. In these cases, it must be reported on the game sheet and to the Field Marshall.

Officiating Adjustments:

- Pre-game meetings with Coaches and/or Assessors can take place, if done with physical distancing.
- Player inspections may still be completed, but must be at a distance of no less than two (2) meters (6 feet).
- Assistant Referees must stand a minimum of two (2) meters (6 feet) from the kicker during corner kicks.
- Match Officials are to avoid handling the ball (i.e. free kicks), by directing direct the player to retrieve the ball themselves and indicating the spot of the IFK from a safe distance.
- PEISA in consultation with the applicable league may reduce number of Match Officials needed for a game.