



EDP RESPECT AND ETIQUETTE POLICY (REP)

Playing soccer should be a positive experience that provides opportunities for young athletes to develop as players and helps nurture them to become confident and compassionate individuals.

At EDP, we believe that expectations about the outcomes from participation in youth sports should consist simply of:

1. Players learn and understand the value of teamwork to achieve common goals.
2. Players learn and understand the importance of dedication and hard work to accomplish individual targets and objectives.

Young athletes have a greater chance of success if there is trust with the coach, a trust that should be mirrored and reinforced by other adults in each child's life. Positive input paired with constructive coach communication stimulates a young player's motivation and improves self-esteem.

Considering the challenges that young athletes go through in their careers, coaches and parents should not be overbearing or impose stress onto what children/players do for FUN. Coaches and parents must remain in the background, allowing the player to take responsibility and always being supportive of BOTH success and failure.

Points to remember:

1. Support players; applaud and encourage them at all times.
2. Maintain a respectful distance from the field of play.
3. Refrain from any conduct that will be detrimental to the player, team, club or league.
4. Always be polite and humble regardless of calls from officials.
5. Allow club officials (coaches, managers, etc.) to act as the leaders.
6. Be mindful of players' emotions and damage caused to young players by overly aggressive sideline behavior.

Mistakes are part of all sports. The less mistakes made, the greater chance a team has of being successful, but understand that players and coaches will make mistakes and there are many determining factors that lead to a team or individual making a mistake. One common cause is pressure from the opposing team; this pressure is what creates excitement and challenges coaches to educate their teams. A different source of pressure, a controllable one, is the sideline. Do not inflict unnecessary pressure; encouragement and support, on the other hand, will result in less mistakes, more development, and more enjoyment of the game for both players and the team.

EDP's Respect & Etiquette Policy (REP) aims to reduce and remove sideline pressure for aspiring young athletes. It is intended to support coaches and game day officials as they educate players. Spectators can support their youngsters and REP by refraining from instructing or coaching as well as calling out or targeting individual players. Spectators can also help by consistently supporting coaches as well as the decisions of game day officials, maintaining professional conduct before, during and after the game.

In support of EDP's REP, no referees will be tasked with the management of unruly spectators. That duty will be the responsibility of coaches, club officials, and field marshals. Those groups have the authority to remove spectators who are deemed to be in violation of the REP.

REP: The Game Day Experience

In the interest of creating an enjoyable and developmentally focused game day environment, EDP leagues will adhere to this Respect & Etiquette Policy.

For the purpose of REP, the term "team" is used to describe players as well as all associated spectators including, but not limited to, coaches, managers, club officials, family acquaintances, friends, etc.

REP Guidelines:

Teams are welcome to provide positive feedback (verbal and/or physical) in response to a game. Teams may not provide negative feedback (verbal and/or physical) in response to a game.

The only exception is carded coaches of the teams playing in a game; those coaches are welcome to provide constructive criticism, as deemed appropriate by game officials and EDP staff.

The following actions will be taken when REP has been violated:

First Offense

- Referees shall engage coaches of team(s) to provide official notification that the team has violated REP.
- It is the responsibility of the coach to notify all team members of this violation.

Second Offense

- Referees shall again engage coaches of team(s) to provide official notification that the team has violated REP a second time.
- As a result of this second violation, the violating individual or individuals will be asked to leave the field of play.

A Game Day Standards form is available for referees and coaches to complete as they see fit. This form gives a referee or coach the ability to provide feedback to EDP as it pertains to various game day standards, including adherence to REP. Referee and coach submissions will be reviewed. Submissions from any other party will not be considered. Depending on the nature of the claim(s) against a team, EDP may, at its sole discretion, notify a club of the instance. Teams that receive three notifications from EDP resulting from REP violations will be immediately placed on probation from EDP.

The probation period for a team shall last the full duration of the soccer year (fall & spring seasons). A team that receives an additional notification from EDP while on probation will: A) be immediately removed from their bracket and, B) forfeit all games (played or unplayed) during that soccer season (fall or spring).

Coaches' Technical Area

The referee has the authority to determine if coaches or players are in violation of rules & Code of Conduct.

- Technical Area – Instruction and encouragement. NO derogatory comments to players, referees, parents, spectators. Not limited to members of the other team's bench.
- Referees have the authority to request that coach, assistant coach, team manager or benched player remove themselves from the Technical Area for any non-compliance with IFAB/FIFA/EDP rules of play.
- Players and coaching staff must remain within the designated Technical Area once the game is in progress. Coaches or management officials may only enter the field of play at the request of the match officials.
- Technical areas should be lined when possible. Dimensions should be no more than 3 yards from the team bench on either side.
- Unmarked Technical Areas – Coaches and all rostered members of the team shall remain within a 3-yard radius of the bench.
- Technical Area must be on the opposing side to the spectator sideline.
- No unauthorized personnel are allowed on the coaches' sideline.
- Technical Area shall consist of only rostered players, rostered coaches/club officials (which may include Team Manager, DOC, TD, etc.). ONLY ONE MEMBER OF THE COACHING/MANAGEMENT STAFF MAY STAND AT A TIME. Remaining club officials in the Technical Area must be seated or remain behind the player bench. (No coaches/club officials are allowed to walk the touch line.)

Referee Substitution Protocol

- All substitutions are to be conducted at the Halfway Line and in the presence of the assistant referee. A player may only enter the field of play once the substituted player has been removed.
- The game can only commence once the assistant referee has regained his or her position on the sideline.

Referees & Coaches – Management of Unruly Spectators

In keeping with a player- and game-focused approach, coaches are responsible for the management of spectator behavior while on the sidelines. Referees should NEVER engage with unruly spectators. Procedure for management of unruly spectators is as follows:

1. Referee will request that the coach speak to the offending spectator(s) and issue first warning.
2. If a second incident occurs, the referee will request that the coach remove the offending spectator.
3. If the coach complies and the offending spectator leaves, the game continues with no discipline to the coach or team.
4. If the coach complies and supports the referee's removal request but the offending spectator refuses to leave, the game will be declared a forfeit with no disciplinary sanctions placed on the coach.
 - a. The offending spectator's club will be asked to conduct an internal investigation, and submit a report to EDP Referee Administrator and League Director. This report will be kept on file to monitor future conduct.
5. If the coach refuses to comply with the referee's request, the coach will be subject to the following:
 - a. Offending coach's club will have the opportunity to conduct an internal investigation. Following the investigation, a report including sanctions decided upon will be submitted to EDP's Referee Administrator and League Director for review. Upon review and approval by EDP, all sanctions shall be adhered to by the offending coach.
 - b. As an appeal to the club's internal investigation, the offending coach or his/her club may request an independent hearing, and EDP will comply with this request provided all hearing costs are paid by the requesting coach or club. The hearing committee will consist of: EDP League Director, EDP Referee Administrator, and one club board member (club board member shall be from an independent club and will not have been present during the incident in question). Sanctions issued by the hearing committee will be final and must be adhered to by the offending coach and his/her club.
 - c. EDP reserves the right to add additional sanctions as it deems necessary.

NOTE: Referees MUST approach the coach and not the offender. If the referee approaches the offender directly, there will be no discipline for the coach, and the referee may be subject to EDP suspension (depends on severity of incident).