

Referee FAQ

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Who are the referees?

They are all volunteers, they are us. Many referees start when their children are young and move up with them. Referee training is provided for all age groups and levels.

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Why does AYSO need volunteer referees?

AYSO is 100 percent volunteer organization; we all do it for the kids. Each season we need as many referees as coaches if not more. AYSO is about playing Fun, Fair and Safe. Our referee training is what makes it possible. If there is no official to referee a game the kids don't get to play.

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How do I become an AYSO referee?

Simple, fill out the online application form, take the online Safe Haven training and take the Basic Referee course. The online volunteer application is available at www.eayso.org. Once complete, submit a copy to the Region 1031 Referee Administrator. The RRA will complete your application by providing you an AYSO ID and register you for the next referee course. In addition to the Basic referee course, you will also need to take the online Safe Haven course at [AYSO Online Training](#). This course along with your referee certification course covers you under the National AYSO insurance. For more info, contact the referee administrator at rra@ayso1031.org.

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Where do I buy my uniform? Does my Region pay for this?

Region 1013 will provide you all the equipment. You will get a referee jersey, shorts, socks, wallet, whistle and your badge.

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Can I referee my own child's games?

Generally we do not allow you to referee your child's game. Exceptions are made in the U8 games. In some case we may allow you to be an Assistant Referee to your child's game (U10 and above). For the obvious reason of conflict of interest you cannot be the Center referee to your child's game

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What is Safe Haven™?

AYSO makes a commitment to provide a safe place for children to play and compete. The referee has a responsibility to help make the environment safe, as well as fun. To ensure the safety of both children and volunteers, each volunteer is required to take a short in-person or online training session called Safe Haven™. It focuses on safety and appropriate behavior with children as well as first aid and other on-field issues. Agreeing to a background check is also required for each volunteer.

[Learn More about Safe Haven™](#)

Safe Haven™ is a unique program that all AYSO volunteers are required and how we can all participate in making the AYSO experience a positive one for our kids. In addition, there is an

online class. Safe Haven™ certification is mandatory for all AYSO coaches and referees on a nation-wide basis, and can be obtained by attending a clinic where Safe Haven™ training is offered. A referee who has been Safe Haven™ certified will be entitled to legal protection for work as a referee under the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997.

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Is prior soccer experience required to officiate?

No, but some familiarity with soccer is certainly a plus. Coaches, parents, players and other volunteers have all proved to be excellent referees even if they have never played soccer. Youth referees are welcome!

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I am a soccer player and understand the game very well; can I just take the certification test and avoid some or all of the beginning course?

Currently this is not an option. However, an online Basic Referee Training course is currently under development. It will take less time to complete for those already familiar with the game or for those who would prefer to take their time and learn at their own pace in the comfort of their own home. Many of those who have played the game and think they know the Laws of the Game are surprised to find out how much there is to learn when they actually start studying to become a referee. Attending a face to face training course with an experienced instructor is a valuable learning experience.

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What are the certification levels?

There are the six certification levels for AYSO referees. Here is a brief description of the requirements for each. Contact your Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) for more details:

Regional Referee

Complete the Basic Referee Course and pass the Regional Referee Exam.

Intermediate Referee

Complete 25 games as referee with at least five in U-12 games, complete the Intermediate Referee Course, pass the Intermediate Referee Exam and be (observed) mentored in a U-12 game.

Advanced Referee

Complete 50 games as referee with at least 10 in U-14 and five as an assistant referee (in U-14), complete the Advanced Referee Course, pass the Advanced Referee Exam, pass one assessment as referee and one as assistant referee in a U-14 match, pass the AYSO Physical Fitness Test and do a minimum of five service units (contact your RRA for details).

National Referee

Complete 100 games as referee with at least 30 in U-16 and U-19 games and 25 as Assistant Referee with at least 10 in U-19, complete the National Referee Course, pass the National Referee Exam, pass two assessments as referee in U-16 or U-19 matches and one as assistant referee in a U-19 match, complete the AYSO Physical Fitness Test and do an additional five service units (contact your RRA for details).

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Who is the Referee Administrator? What do they do?

The Referee Administrator is the person responsible for implementing the AYSO National Referee Program in specific parts of the country (Region, Area, Section or National). Contact your Region 1031 Referee Administrator at rra@ayso1031.org

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What do I do if I have a problem at a game with a coach or a spectator?

The referee has the authority to remove a coach or spectator from the playing area. In the event the coach or spectator refuses, the referee should suspend the match. Report to the Referee Administrator all incidents in which a coach or a spectator behaves in a way that makes a game something other than a safe, positive, enjoyable growth experience for the children. Incident report forms are available on the Region 1031 referee web page [here](#)

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May referees wear hats or sunglasses?

Soccer referees have not historically needed to wear hats or sunglasses and AYSO referees are discouraged from doing so. Hats, in some cases, may be desired for sun-protection health reasons. Use of hats on cloudy days should be avoided. Hats should not be worn for night games.

Hats, if worn, should be solid black or predominately black with white trim, or solid white or predominately white with black trim. Hats should bear no logos or slogans other than AYSO logos (traditional, promotional, Regional or tournament) and AYSO national sponsor logos.

Sunglasses are likewise discouraged for referees as this restricts communication through eye contact with players and are generally considered unnecessary adornment.

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Who is responsible for the players' Medical Release Forms?

It is the coach's responsibility to be in possession of the Medical Release Forms at all practices and games. Referees are not required, nor recommended, to ask coaches to prove that they have players' Medical Release Forms in their possession at games. Referees should not require coaches to produce the forms at matches as this would, in effect, put the referee in the position of assuming a responsibility that properly belongs with the coach.

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