

Duties of the Referee Coach

The duties of the Referee Coach vary and are detailed below. The main role of the Referee Coach is to provide guidance and direction to the assigned referee, whether as a whistle or an assistant referee. The Timbers/Thorns League has designed this position in partnership with Oregon Youth Soccer Association to further develop referees within the State of Oregon. Far too many referees leave the sport due to poor experiences in which a Referee Coach could have helped prevent; communication and support allow the referee to feel supported on the field when an unfamiliar situation arises. US Soccer Player Development Initiatives promote the use of one referee at the u12 and below level and in accordance, this process was created. The US Soccer Development Academy program also utilizes one referee; the TTL has taken it a step further and added the position of a Referee Coach to provide real time training and development of referees.

The duties of the Referee Coach are as follows:

- Arrive at the field 30 minutes prior to kick-off; just like the referee
- Make themselves visible to the referee and participating teams
- Provide guidance to the referee on how to properly inspect the field for safety (walk them through the process)
- Engage in a conversation with the referee to prepare them mentally for the match
- Introduce themselves to the coaching staff of each team
- Assist the referee with player/coach check-in
 - They may split up and check-in teams separately (if necessary)
 - Provide guidance by showing the referee how to properly perform the player/coach check-in
- Provide guidance to the referee during the coin toss
- Provide any last minute words of encouragement to the referee before kick-off
- The position of the Referee Coach may vary once the game begins
 - For the most part, the Referee Coach may stand/sit in a chair at the half line of the field
 - The Referee Coach may roam around the field as to gain a better vantage point
 - The Referee Coach is not required to stay in one position throughout the game, although may choose to
- The Referee Coach shall not engage with either coach in a negative manner
 - The Referee Coach may engage with either coach for purposes of clarification, understanding or assistance
- The coach shall not engage with the Referee Coach in a negative manner
 - Arguing decisions the referee made are not acceptable
 - The coach may engage the Referee Coach for purposes of clarification, understanding or assistance
- During halftime, the Referee Coach may choose to communicate to the referee for purposes of providing guidance, decision making clarification, Laws of the Game guidance and Rules of Competition guidance – remember, this is an educational/developmental process and discouraging the referee will result in a negative experience for all
- The Referee Coach must show ultimate support to the referee no matter what
- Upon conclusion of the game, the Referee Coach shall communicate an overall summary of performance to the referee
 - The Referee Coach shall not offer pass/fail guidance, rather, provide solutions for areas of opportunity
- The Referee Coach should formulate a plan of action for the referee, if necessary
- Lastly, the Referee Coach is to provide written feedback to the Local Area Assignor and to OYSA for purposes of referee training and development

The Referee Coach is a vital member of the referee development team. They, along with the coach, can provide a meaningful experience, which allows the referee to grow and feel confident in their performance.