

Referee Liaison Program

It is mandatory for every team (All U8 – U19 Club teams and all U13/U15/U17/U19 Community) to provide a referee liaison for every league game. The liaison can be a different person each game and can be anyone with the exception of the coach or assistant coach. The name of the referee liaison **MUST** be marked in the area provided on the game sheet. They must be at least 18 years old.

The team has a 15-minute grace period in which to provide a liaison or they will default the game. Please ensure the name is marked on the game sheet.

Background:

The abuse of game officials by coaches and spectators is the main reason why referees (especially those in their early teens) drop out of the development program. As a result, we face severe shortages of game officials at all levels. Addressing this unacceptable behavior is a top priority for EMSA, particularly if minor soccer is to have an adequate supply of referees.

Both Home and Away teams are required to provide a referee liaison for every EMSA league game. The referee liaison can be any person over the age of 18, with the exception of the teams registered coaching staff (managers are ok to be the RL). The referee liaison can be a different person each game and their name must be **PRINTED** on the game sheet in the space provided. The referee liaison must wear an identifying neck lanyard and sit in a visible area in the stands with the spectators.

The referee liaison must be an individual who is willing and able to control and monitor the behavior of the parents and coaches throughout the game. This role is to be taken very seriously and the goal of this role is to keep the parents and coaches in the game following the rules as set forth in code of conduct as well as maintaining respect for the referees and opposing team. This role is not in place for the referee liaison to question any calls made by the refs.

Description of Duties

- Wear the referee liaison neck lanyard – this is to be provided by your Zone Office or Club Director.
- Place yourself in the middle of your team's spectators.
- Monitor the behavior of your teams' spectators and coaching staff.
- Quickly diffuse potential issues before they escalate by either making your presence more visible, or calmly addressing the behavior with the person(s) involved.
- Address inappropriate comments, gestures, and/or any other unsporting behavior directed at the game officials, players, coaching staff or any other individual by your teams' spectators.
- Submit a brief report in writing, outlining any incidents involving any individuals, to the referee after the game or to the EMSA office.

Failure to provide a referee liaison will result in a default win for the opposing team. All teams are granted a 15-minute grace period to provide a referee liaison.

