



**2015**

**W-LEAGUE**

**REFEREE MANUAL**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **USL Referee Services Program**

Mission Statement	1
Vision	1
Values	1
Strategic Direction	1

### **USL National Federations Contact List**

Canadian Soccer Association	2
United States Soccer Federation	2

### **Rules of Competition**

Playing Rules	3
FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark	3
Game Officials	3

### **Stadium and Playing Field**

Seating Capacity	4
Lighting	4
Dressing Rooms	4
Scoreboard	4
Playing Surface	4
Field Dimensions	4
Field Markings	4

### **Uniforms**

Player Uniforms	6
USL Logo	6
Team Logo	6
Uniform Numbers	6
Player Names	6
Uniform Selection	6
Goalkeeper Jersey	6
Warm-ups	6
Referee Uniform	6

### **Game Day Preparation & Presentation**

Game Ball	7
Game Video	7
Complimentary Tickets	7
Arrival to Stadium	7
Game Day Timeline	7
Field Evaluation	7
National Flag	7
Scorekeeper / Fourth Official's Table	7
Benches	7
Ice and Water	7
Exchange of Official Game Day Lineup Sheet	8
Official Player Passes	8
Team Warm-up Period	8
Coaches and Reserve Players Entry	8
Team and Referee Introductions	8
National Anthem(s)	9

National Anthem Demeanor	9
Bench Personnel	9
Official Time	9
Substitutions	9
Substitution Passes	9
Putting a New Ball into Play	9
Halftime Activities	10
Second Half Preparation	10
Approaching Game Officials	10
Entering the Field	10
USL Ejected Players and Coaches Removal Policy	10
End of the Game	10
Overtime	10
Escorting Officials Off the Field	10
<b>Post-Game Reporting</b>	
Official Score Sheet	11
Referee Game Report	11
USSF Supplemental Report	11
<b>Game Delays and Postponements</b>	
Canceling / Postponing a Game Prior to Start	12
Authority to Delay or Postpone a Game	12
Grace Period Before Abandoning a Game	12
Game Cancelation / Postponement Criteria	12
Before Officials Arrive at Venue	12
Referee “No Show”	13
Incomplete Game	13
Termination Procedures for Single-Match Playoff Series	13
Rescheduling a Postponed Game	13
Rescheduling Considerations	13
Written Explanation of Postponement	14
Stadium Clearances are Final	14
<b>Lightning and Severe Weather</b>	
Lightning and Severe Weather	15
<b>Emergency Medical and Evacuation Plan</b>	
Emergency Medical and Evacuation Plan	15
<b>Injured Player Removal Policy</b>	
Injured Player Removal Policy	15
<b>Disciplinary Procedures</b>	
Player Misconduct Classifications	17
Player Send-Off Classifications	18
<b>Match Misconduct</b>	
Coach / Staff Caution and Ejections	19
Guidelines for Send-Off (Current Match)	19
Serving Suspensions – Player	19
Serving Suspensions – Coaches and Team Staff	19
Major Match Misconduct	20

<b>Travel</b>	
Local Travel	21
Non-Local Travel	21
Travel After Midnight	21
Multi-match Road Trip	21
<b>Hotel Accommodations</b>	
Hotel Accommodations	21
<b>Game Times</b>	
Game Times	21
<b>Expense Guidelines</b>	
Payment of Referees – completed and/or canceled matches	22
Completion of Expense Report	22
Nonpayment of Referee Fees and Expenses	22
W-League Expenses	23
Cross-Over Matches	24
College Exhibition Matches	24
International Matches	24
<b>USL Staff Contacts</b>	
General Information	25
League Director	25

### **USL Referee Services Program**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the USL Referee Services Program is to ensure the provision of the most qualified officials who will provide professional officiating services to all of its member leagues.

#### **Vision**

The USL Referee Services Program will utilize all of its resources in concert with FIFA and all appropriate National Federations and their respective Referee Programs in the discovery, preparation, education and training of soccer officials whose performance warrants consideration for promotion to FIFA level officiating.

#### **Values**

The USL Referee Services Program values its match officials who are able to recognize and accept the role of the referee in the match of soccer at all levels.

The USL Referee Services Program values its match officials who possess:

- The highest standards of ethics and integrity;
- The highest standards of mental and physical fitness;
- The unique skill of identifying and incorporating into their match assignment the various cultures, beliefs and awareness of the diversities of players and coaches.

The USL Referee Services Program values its officials who are open minded to critical self-evaluation as well as the reception of constructive criticism from National Federation assessors, as well as USL observers in the analysis of their performance.

#### **Strategic Direction**

The USL Referee Services Program will:

- Establish a working and developmental relationship with the National Federations to ensure an appropriate environment for education, training, development and assessment of match officials to be appropriately promoted
- Provide USL referees with the appropriate administrative support and information to ensure the highest level of success
- Provide all member leagues and affiliated teams weekly disciplinary action, and individual player penalty point summaries
- To enforce the well-defined policy and process with regard to appeals
- Continue to develop a team-driven referees performance evaluation program
- Provide for the award of USL Referee of the Year in each league

**USL National Federations**

**Canadian Soccer Association**

Place Soccer Canada  
237 Metcalfe Street  
Ottawa, ONT K2P 1R2  
Contact: Joe Guest  
Phone: (613) 237-7678  
Fax: (613) 237-1516  
[www.canadasoccer.com](http://www.canadasoccer.com)

**United States Soccer Federation**

Soccer House  
1801 S. Prairie Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60616  
Contact: Asher Mendelsohn  
Phone: (312) 808-1300  
Fax: (312) 808-1301  
[www.ussoccer.com](http://www.ussoccer.com)

### Rules of Competition

The following information provides a basic overview of the rules of competition for regular and post-season play in USL. Periodically, additional information will be added to the Referee assignment website, <https://ussoccer.gameofficials.net>.

### Playing Rules

Each USL game shall be played in accordance with the most recent edition of the FIFA Laws of the Game, and any rules of competition established by USL and approved by the appropriate National Federations.

### FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark

The “Reduce to Equate” Principle shall be implemented in those matches for which the rules of competition mandate the taking of kicks from the penalty mark under the following guidelines:

- The kicks phase of the match begins at the moment regulation play ends (including any overtime periods of play).
- A team might have fewer than eleven players eligible to participate at the end of regulation play due to injury or misconduct or because the team began the match with fewer players.
- The captain of the team with more players must identify which of its players will not participate if regulation play ends with the team at unequal sizes.
- “Players eligible to participate” include those players who are legally on the field at the end of regulation play, plus any other players off the field temporarily (e.g., to correct equipment, bleeding, or having an injury tended).
- Only the goalkeeper may be substituted in the case of injury during the kicks phase and only if the team has a substitution remaining from its permitted maximum.
- Once kicks begin (following any “reduce to equate” adjustment), a player may become unable to participate due to injury or ineligible to participate due to misconduct.
- Under no circumstances will a team be required to “reduce to equate” if the opposing team loses one or more players due to injury or misconduct occurring during the kicks phase of the match.
- Until a result is produced, both teams must continue to use their eligible players without duplication until all (including the goalkeeper) have kicked, at which time players who have already kicked may kick again. If one team has fewer players than the other, it will need to begin using again its players who have already kicked sooner than will the opposing team.

### Game Officials

Game Officials for each USL game shall consist of the Referee, Senior Assistant Referee and Junior Assistant Referee. A Fourth Official shall be assigned only upon request for W-League matches. The League shall notify teams of the Game Officials.

#### Referee

The Referee shall have general oversight and control of the game and shall exercise the powers granted to him by the FIFA Laws of the Game. The Referee's duties to start the game are outlined later in this Manual.

#### Assistant Referees

Two (2) Assistant Referees shall assist the Referee in controlling the game. Upon their arrival to the stadium, the Assistant Referees shall report to the Referee. The Assistant Referees are defined as the Senior Assistant (bench side) or AR1 and Junior Assistant or AR2.

#### Fourth Official

The Fourth Official shall assist with administrative duties, procedures for substitutions and, if necessary, be responsible for the replacement of the game ball to eliminate unnecessary delays in the game. The Fourth Official shall be situated at a table at midfield on the team bench side of the field, between the two team benches, approximately EIGHT (8) to TEN (10) feet outside the touchline.

### **Stadium and Playing Field**

#### **Seating Capacity**

Each stadium must have a minimum seating capacity of 1,000 persons.

#### **Lighting**

Each stadium must have floodlights with minimum 40 foot candles for night play.

#### **Dressing Rooms**

Each stadium must have dressing rooms for the home team, visiting team and referees with working showers that have hot water and towels.

#### **Scoreboard**

Each stadium must have a working, electronic scoreboard that displays home team / visiting team scores, half, and a 45 minute time clock that counts up from 0:00.

#### **Playing Surface**

Each stadium must have a playing surface that consists of natural grass or FIFA approved synthetic turf and must be in good playing condition. The grass length on game day shall not exceed one and one-half (1-1/2) inches.

#### **Field Dimensions**

The minimum playing surface dimensions are 106 yards x 66 yards.

#### **Field Markings**

The dimensions and markings of the field shall be measured according to standard FIFA specifications. This includes clear, distinct field markings that are five inches wide on a field that remains a constant size during the season. Goal nets and corner flags should be free of advertising.

#### Bench & Technical Area

Per the FIFA Laws of the Game, the technical area relates to matches played in stadiums with a designated seated area for technical staff and substitutes. Both the home and visiting team's benches shall be placed on the same side of the field on the side designated by the stadium field plan. The home team shall designate the bench locations at the start of the season, and shall not change these locations during the season. The bench area shall be marked according to FIFA's technical area markings and the bench should accommodate no more than twelve (12) persons per team.

#### Penalty Area

At each end of the field, a line perpendicular to the goal line shall be drawn parallel to each side of the goal and eighteen (18) yards from each goalpost. This line shall extend for eighteen (18) yards into the field of play from the goal line. A line running parallel to the goal line shall be drawn to connect the two perpendicular lines, which shall form the "penalty area." Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made twelve (12) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of ten (10) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

#### Goals & Goal Area

At each end of the field, a line perpendicular to the goal line shall be drawn parallel on each side of the goal and six (6) yards from each goalpost. This line shall extend six (6) yards into the field of play from the goal line. A line running parallel to the goal line shall be drawn to connect the two perpendicular lines, forming the "goal area." Each goal shall be centered on the goal line and equal distance on each side from the corner flags. Game day goals shall be the size approved by FIFA.

#### Halfway Mark & and Center Circle

A halfway line shall be marked across the center of the field. The center of the field shall be so marked and have a circle, which has a ten (10) yard radius, drawn around it.



### Corner Area & Flags

At each of the four corners of the field measuring from the corner flags post, a quarter circle of a radius of one (1) yard shall be drawn inside the field of play. Corner flags shall be on posts not less than five (5) feet high with non-pointed tops.

### **Uniforms**

#### **Player Uniforms**

All players shall wear identical uniforms as provided by the official uniforms supplier. The goalkeeper's uniform shall be different colors than the team uniform and shall conform to FIFA and USL guidelines.

Slide pants or compression shorts may be worn under uniform shorts if they match the predominate color of the uniform shorts.

The Referee shall enforce all FIFA equipment rules and any equipment deemed dangerous shall be removed.

#### **USL Logo**

The USL logo must be permanently affixed to the left sleeve of the jersey.

#### **Team Logo**

The team name and/or team logo must be present on the front of the game jerseys.

#### **Uniform Numbers**

Each uniform must contain numbers on the front and the back. Number size must be a minimum of eight (8) inches on the back of jersey and three (3) inches on the front of the jersey OR shorts.

#### **Player Names**

Player names must be printed on the back of the game jerseys for League championship matches if the championship event will be broadcast on national television.

#### **Uniform Selection**

The home team has the right to select the color of its home uniform and must inform the visiting team of its choice via the Home Team Travel Information Sheet. Visiting team must wear a contrasting uniform. In case of a conflict the visiting team is required to change. The League Director should be notified. The referee has the authority to resolve the conflict if the League Director is unavailable.

#### **Goalkeeper Jersey**

The goalkeeper jersey must be distinct from both the home team and the visiting team. The referee has the authority to require a goalkeeper jersey change.

#### **Warm-ups**

All team warm-ups should be identical for all players and should tie in with the color scheme of the uniforms.

#### **Referee Uniform**

All referees are required to supply their own uniform. USL competitions require the use of approved uniforms by the appropriate National Federations.

### **Game Preparation & Presentation**

Game day presentation for all USL matches should be professional and consistent. This shall be accomplished by adhering to all USL League Regulations and Standards. The following guidelines shall apply to all USL games, including, but not limited to, all regular season, exhibition, playoff, Championship, All-Star, and/or international games in which any USL team participates other than unadvertised scrimmages or practice games at which no admission is charged or monies collected.

### **Game Ball**

USL will provide official League game balls to be used for all regular season and playoff matches. No other ball is to be used by members clubs. A minimum of four (4) official game balls must be available throughout the game.

### **Game Video**

It is “strongly encouraged” for all USL teams to provide a video copy of their home matches to the Center Referee. If you are not provided one, please do not hesitate to ask your assigned liaison if a copy will be made available to you.

### **Complimentary Tickets**

The home team must provide 2 complimentary tickets per referee crew member.

### **Arrival to Stadium**

The home team and visiting team must arrive at the stadium at least 60 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff. Each member of the referee crew must arrive at the stadium at least 90 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff.

### **Game Day Timeline**

Home team must give the visiting team and referee crew a copy of the Game Day Timeline immediately upon their arrivals to the stadium. A copy of the Game Day Timeline must also be displayed in the visiting team and referee dressing rooms. The Game Day Timeline provides a detailed minute-by-minute breakdown of game day, specifically including the two (2) hours preceding kick-off, how and where to line up for introductions, pre-game ceremonies and additional instructions that assist all parties in the game day operation. This timeline shall be strictly adhered to unless previous arrangements have been made with the home team.

### **Field Evaluation**

The Director of Operations must meet with the Referee at least sixty (60) minutes prior to the kickoff to assure the field is properly marked, the goals are in place and secure, the nets are properly fastened, the corner and midfield flags are proper and in place, and the balls are properly inflated. Anything deemed insufficient by the referee must be immediately corrected by the home team.

### **National Flag**

The home team must display the national flag representing the country of the home team and the visiting team at all home games. In the event the opponent is from a foreign country, that country’s flag shall also be displayed. Color guards are acceptable. Flags must be of equal size and displayed at the same height.

### **Scorekeeper / Fourth Official’s Table**

The home team must provide a table at midfield with chairs and communication to the press box and clock operator for the scorekeeper and the Fourth Official.

### **Benches**

The home team must provide benches / seating to accommodate no more than twelve (12) persons.

### **Ice and Water**

The home team must provide ice and water in clean coolers and cups (or squirt bottles) at both benches, in both changing rooms and in the referee changing room. Water should be replenished on request and at half-time.

### **Exchange of Official Game Day Lineup Sheet**

The Official Game Day Lineup sheet may include up to 18 eligible players from the team's Master Roster. The home team and visiting team must submit a copy of their Official Game Day Lineup sheet to the opposing team and referee forty-five (45) minutes prior to the start of the match. The home team must deliver copies of the home team's and visiting team's Official Game Day Lineup sheet to the P.A. announcer and media.

Once the Official Game Day Lineup sheets of both teams have been submitted to the referees they may only be changed in the event that a player is subsequently deemed "unable to compete." Should this occur, the unfit player must be completely removed from the Official Game Day Lineup Sheet and may not be listed as a substitute. The player may be replaced either with one of the seven listed substitutes or by another Eligible Player from the Master Roster that is not already on the Official Game Day Lineup Sheet without this counting as one of the team's six player substitutions. If the unfit player is replaced by one of the seven listed substitutes, a new Eligible Player from the Master Roster may not be added to the Official Game Day Lineup Sheet to bring the Game Day Roster back to 18 players. Any adjustments to the Official Game Day Lineup made after the time they were originally submitted to the referees must be communicated to and approved by the center referee and must be immediately communicated to the opponent's head coach.

### **Official Player Passes**

All registered players must have an Official Player Pass. The home team and visiting team must present Official Player Passes for all players listed on the Official Game Day Lineup sheet to the Referee prior to each game. The player pass must include the player's photo ID, player registration number and must be laminated.

### **Team Warm-up Period**

Each team shall be entitled to a concurrent warm-up period of twenty (20) minutes which shall end pursuant to the Game Day Timeline. Following the pre-game warm-up period, the Director of Operations shall order the players and coaching staff to the locker rooms.

### **Coaches and Reserve Players Entry**

Prior to the team and referee introductions, the coaches and reserve players shall enter the field and walk along the sidelines to their team benches. Reserve players should wear identical equipment that distinguishes them from starting players.

### **Team and Referee Introductions**

Home team, visiting team, and referees must be introduced prior to the start of the game. Each starting player shall be dressed in their designated team jersey, shorts, and socks for pre-game introductions and the match.

#### Introduction of Game Officials, Coaches, and Players

The game officials, coaching staff, and players shall comply with the introduction procedures designated in the game day information sheet.

- At a time designated on the Game Day Timeline and in the manner set forth in the game day information, the referees shall be introduced first, starting with the referee, senior assistant referee, junior assistant referee and the fourth official (if applicable).
- The visiting team's starting lineup shall be introduced after the game officials and in the order listed on the starting lineup. The head coach and assistant coach(es) shall remain on the sideline but shall be introduced after the visiting team.
- The home team's starting lineup shall be introduced according to team preference. The head coach, assistant coach (es), trainer, and team physician shall remain on the sideline but shall be introduced after the home team.
- The home team shall script the introductions for the PA Announcer.

The game officials and starting teams shall enter the field at the time specified by the Coaches / Referees Competition Timeline for introductions and the National Anthem(s). Each team's player introductions shall meet the following criteria:

- The team shall be at the field center line in presentation formation for the National Anthem(s);
- During TV Games, all National Anthems shall take place during the TV window of :02:00 to :04:30

### **National Anthem(s)**

The National Anthem of the home team shall be played immediately following the entry of the players as dictated by the Game Day Timeline. Both teams shall remain in public view and pre-game presentation formation during the National Anthem and all players shall face the flag. If the visiting team is from another country, the visiting team's National Anthem shall be played first and their country's flag displayed. The home team's anthem shall follow. In this case the Game Day Timeline shall be adjusted.

### **National Anthem Demeanor**

During the National Anthem(s), the head coach, trainer, physician, and other authorized bench personnel shall remain standing on the touchline facing the flag. The game officials shall stand at center field facing the flag. Players and game officials shall refrain from jogging in place and talking. A respectful appearance shall be maintained.

### **Bench Personnel**

A maximum of twelve (12) individuals are permitted in the technical area – limited to substitutes, coaches, trainers, or physicians. A maximum of five (5) non-playing personnel are allowed on each team bench. These persons can either be coaches or medical staff (names must be submitted to USL prior to season and notify league of any changes.) Team owners, general managers, and other executives are not permitted to sit on the bench unless they are an active roster player or recognized team coach. No player shall sit on the bench in street clothes, nor should any players not on the Game Day Lineup Sheet be in the technical area.

### **Official Time**

Official time will be kept on the field by the referee. The amount of extra time in each half will be conveyed by the Referee to the Fourth Official or Assistant Referee. The Fourth Official/Assistant Referee will then display the appropriate time left in the match. The PA Announcer should then announce how much time is left in the match.

### **Substitutions**

Substitutes shall report to the Fourth Official or Assistant Referee at midfield and may not enter the field without the permission of the referee. A player who has been replaced by a substitute may not return to the field in the same game. Any player re-entering the game will be deemed as an ineligible player. Any player that enters the game after the substitution allotment has been used will be deemed as an Ineligible Player.

#### Regular Season Games

W-League; Six (6) substitutes

#### Exhibition (paid gate) & Scrimmage (non-paid gate) Games

Unlimited substitutions as long as both teams agree on the number and the officials are informed of the arrangement upon arrival at the venue.

#### Goalkeeper Substitution

The goalkeeper may change places with a field player as long as the referee is informed of the change and the change is made during a stoppage in the match. *Note: Delay or time wasting is not acceptable during the exchange process. The match should not be held up to allow for a complete change of equipment by either player.*

### **Substitution Passes**

All substitution passes shall be verified by the referee with the Official Game Day Lineup Sheet prior to the player entering the match.

### **Putting a New Ball into Play**

When the ball goes out of play beyond the sideline or over the goal line, the nearest ball retrievers shall make sure that the player putting the ball back into play has a ball for the restart as quickly as possible.

### **Halftime Activities**

Halftime shall officially begin as soon as the referee blows the whistle signifying the end of the first half. The duration of halftime for all games shall be fifteen (15) minutes unless otherwise authorized by the USL.

### **Second Half Preparation**

Five (5) minutes before the start of the second half, each team shall be notified by the team liaison. No later than three (3) minutes before the start of the second half, each team shall exit the locker rooms for the field. The Team Liaisons shall ensure teams are notified of the three-minute warning.

### **Approaching Game Officials**

No player, coach or team staff member shall threaten game officials either verbally or physically nor make contact in any manner either before, during or after the match. Coaches and team staff shall not approach game officials prior to the game, at the end of the half, on the way to or from the locker room to lobby for a certain call, discuss the approach to the game, or to criticize a game official's performance. No one may enter the referees' dressing room without permission. It is strongly recommended that someone stand at the officials' dressing room door as security. The Referee shall report all such incidents in the Referee Game Report, and offending individuals shall be subject to a League fine and/or suspension. The **Coach's Evaluation of Referees** is the proper vehicle to express opinions on a game official's performance.

### **Entering the Field**

A Player, Coach or other Team Staff member entering the playing field during a USL game when not authorized to do so shall be fined and / or suspended by the League.

### **USL Ejected Players & Coaches Removal Policy**

Players and coaches sent off from the field of play shall be met at the sideline at midfield by home team security and escorted to the locker room, and are not permitted to watch the game. They must remain in the locker room for the remainder of the match. Additionally, coaches are not permitted to communicate with their team staff or players during the remainder of the game, and are not allowed to remain in the locker room during half time. The type of communication prohibited would include: cellular, 2-way radios, electronic / digital, written or verbal. Players or coaches returning to the field of play or stands during or directly following the match are subject to additional sanctions.

Note: Security personnel should only enter the field at the Referee's request.

### **End of the Game**

Two (2) minutes before the end of the game, security personnel shall position themselves between the field perimeter and the locker rooms. All spectators shall remain outside of the locker rooms at all times. Media may be permitted entrance to the locker room ten (10) minutes after the conclusion of the game.

### **Overtime**

There will be no overtime during the regular season. For Playoffs, USL will have the discretion to adjust the playoff overtime format annually. Please refer to the supplemental playoff document for more details on playoff overtime procedures for each league.

### **Escorting Officials Off the Field**

Security officers must be present, when necessary, to escort officials to and from the field. They are to meet officials on the field and escort them to the door of their locker room. Security officers shall be prepared, when indicated, to provide an escort to the officials' respective vehicles.

### **Post-Game Reporting**

Game reports are required in order to properly adjudicate player discipline as well as utilized to help maintain USL league regulations and standards compliance. Game reports must be legible and properly completed before submitting to USL.

### **Official Score Sheet**

The home team must submit a copy of the completed Official Score Sheet within two (2) hours following the completion of the match. All sections must be completed and legible. At the game's conclusion, the home team coach and visiting team coach must initial the score sheet while the referee must verify the cautions, send-offs and goals / assists by also signing the score sheet.

### **Referee Game Report**

The home team must submit the Referee Game Report within two (2) hours following the completion of the match. This form is a disciplinary summary that includes all cautions, send-offs, and a quick checklist of league regulations & standards. All clubs must see to it that the referee fills out the report and hands it over to a representative of the home team.

### **USSF Supplemental Report**

The USSF Supplemental Report for each separate and unusual incident or send-off must be submitted to USL via fax and/or e-mail within 48 hours following the match.

### **Game Delays and Postponements**

In the case of a game delay, the Home Team shall immediately communicate the delay, via phone, to their League Director. The League Director shall distribute Emergency Game Day Contact Numbers to all teams prior to the start of the season. It is imperative that the rules and procedures of this section are explicitly followed in determining whether to delay, postpone, or cancel a game. If the kickoff is delayed because the visiting team arrived late, the visiting team shall be fined in accordance with league standards. The home team, in consultation with the League Directors and referees, shall determine the start time for any delays in excess of twenty (20) minutes.

#### Canceling / Postponing a Game Prior to Start

A game may be canceled / postponed no earlier than two (2) hours prior to kickoff because of inclement weather or situations considered Acts of God, unless agreed to by both teams and the League Office. Exception: In a case where a third party (stadium owner) closes a stadium, a game may be canceled more than two (2) hours prior to kickoff, provided the League and both teams are notified in writing by the stadium owner / managing authority.

#### Authority to Delay or Postpone a Game

Once in progress, a USL match may only be delayed or postponed due to:

- A lack of preparedness of one or both teams to begin or continue playing a game OR
- Unfavorable weather or other adverse conditions beyond the control of the participating teams, which would make the playing of the game impractical or dangerous. Only the Referee and USL have the authority to delay or postpone a scheduled USL match. The Referee, upon arrival at the stadium, has the final word on delays due to weather.

#### Grace Period Before Abandoning a Game

Unless both teams, the Referee, and League Management agree to an alternate plan, teams must wait a minimum of one (1) hour before abandoning a game that has been delayed regardless of circumstances. This is not an aggregate time for multiple delays but rather one (1) hour from the time of the most recent delay. The Home Team, in the presence of the Referee, must immediately notify the League Director via phone, of any postponement issues. The one-hour grace period may be extended, up to a maximum of three (3) hours from the time the match is delayed if there is a likelihood of resuming the match that day. Given the difficulty and cost of rescheduling, every attempt should be made to continue the game. The League Director has the final say on the length of the extended grace period due to weather (\* It is a minimum standard violation if the game is abandoned before the League Director is contacted). If the League Director or other USL official is unavailable, the Referee shall be the final authority. No match will be continued after any continuous 3-hour waiting period without the approval of the League Director. If the first game of a doubleheader has been delayed, the feasibility of completing the second game will be taken into account when determining an extended grace period.

#### Game Cancellation / Postponement Criteria

Unless otherwise approved by USL, game cancellations / postponements should occur only in the most serious circumstances; however the personal safety of participants, personnel, and spectators shall always be highest priority. Factors that the Referee and USL shall consider include: whether or not the teams have requested the cancellation, difficulty in rescheduling the game, current and forecasted weather conditions, travel conditions, and the current whereabouts of teams and officials.

#### Before Officials Arrive at Venue

In the event a match is to be terminated less than 12 hours prior to kick off due to unforeseen problems, the home team shall immediately contact its League Director to expedite the communication process to assigned referees. The USL Referee Department will then notify the designated official at the National Federation, who will in turn make every effort to notify the referees of the change. It is imperative that all contact numbers for referees be available to the National Federation for such situations. Please contact the National Federation designee before departing for the match if uncertain of the match's status and if there is reason to believe there may be a postponement due to inclement weather.



### Referee “No Show”

In the event the assigned referee crew does not arrive at least one (1) hour before the scheduled kickoff time, the Home Team should immediately contact their League Director. If the appropriate League Director does not immediately respond, the home team should attempt to contact the USL Referee Coordinator, or an alternate League Director (in that order). Should none of the assigned referees be present at the official kickoff time, the teams must wait a minimum of one (1) hour before the possibility of postponement is considered. Again, no game may be abandoned or postponed due to lack of referees until at least one (1) hour has passed since kickoff. After one (1) hour from the original kickoff time has elapsed, the League Director will make a decision as to whether the match should be postponed and rescheduled or further time should be allowed (only in the event of referees on their way to the venue). Active and certified Federation referees must be used as replacements in order for the match to be deemed official. Prior to sending replacements, USL and the respective Federation will determine on a case-by-case basis whether the substitute referees are of sufficient experience and ability to handle the match. Under no circumstances will the replacement referees have less than State or Provincial certification.

### Incomplete Game

In the event a game cannot be completed, the game counts if the entire 1st half was completed. If any match is suspended prior to the completion of the 1st half due to inclement weather or extenuating circumstances, it will resume at a date/time agreed to by the competing teams in consultation with USL and will start in the same minute in which the match was suspended. Every effort must be made to resume the match within the next twenty-four (24) hours. If the game is resumed after the 24-hour period has passed, either team may have a maximum of three (3) changes to their Official Game Day Lineup sheet. Any changes to the lineup on the field, after any of the three (3) changes to the Official Game Day Lineup sheet are made, count towards the substitution allotment. USL reserves the right to declare a full replay at its discretion in order to protect the integrity of the competition.

### Termination Procedures for Single-Match Playoff Series

If the match is tied, the first half completed, the one hour waiting period fulfilled and there must be a winner to advance, then the following will occur:

- Regulation: If terminated during regulation, the match will be resumed at the next possible opportunity and played to completion beginning when the play was stopped and will conclude at either ninety (90) minutes or within overtime, followed by Kicks from the Mark.
- Overtime: If terminated during Overtime, the match will resume at the minute that the match was terminated, followed by Kicks from the Mark, if necessary.
- Back-to-back: If the teams are scheduled to play the following day, then the match will resume the next morning, starting with the overtime period, followed by Kicks from the Mark, if necessary.

\*USL, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to continue any playoff match starting immediately with overtime and penalty kicks, taking into account travel and field situations as well as any other pertinent logistical information. Every attempt will be made to decide the result on the field of play in the most reasonable fashion.

### Rescheduling a Postponed Game

Any postponed game must be rescheduled within seventy-two (72) hours of the original date of the game and must be replayed no later than the second to last weekend of the regular season.

### Rescheduling Considerations

USL Management shall have the authority to review all the facts, (including fault on the part of either team, unavoidable conditions, expense for both teams, and requests by a team to take a particular action in the best interests of USL and its teams) in determining whether and when a game shall be rescheduled, who should bear the financial burden as a result of cancellation or rescheduling, whether the game should be forfeited or cancelled permanently, and whether other fines should be levied. The integrity of the League and the Home Team schedule shall be given considerable weight in the resolution of these matters. Unless the sanction or remedy is set forth specifically in any USL rules or regulations, USL Management shall decide what action to take, and its decision shall be final.

### Written Explanation of Postponement

Whenever a game is postponed or canceled, the League must receive within 48 hours of postponement or cancellation, a written notice of why the game was not completed or played, including, if necessary, and a statement from the owner of the stadium / playing facility.

### Stadium Clearances are Final

Once a team has approved its individual schedule and the League Schedules are officially released, the League will not automatically accept a postponement or cancellation of a game because a stadium is no longer available. It is the Home Team's responsibility to find a league-acceptable alternate venue if necessary on the originally scheduled date.

### Lightning and Severe Weather

Given the likelihood of lightning during the USL season and the potential for personal injury and structural damages lightning can cause, each Home Team shall have a detailed thunderstorm delay plan that includes the following:

1. Specific persons in charge of decision-making (League Director, Referee, home team senior executive and visiting team coach/administrator)
2. Direct contact with the U.S. Weather Bureau and/or Doppler Radar
3. Immediate Contact with the League Director
4. Updates to spectators and media via PA Announcements
5. "Standing Orders" (procedures) published and posted to accomplish the above

### Emergency Medical and Evacuation Plan

Every Team shall establish Game Day emergency medical and evacuation procedures in conjunction with its stadium authority. As with other stadium rules, differences may occur between stadiums on how and who shall implement these plans. Teams shall conduct a pre-season table-top discussion whereby all Game Day Staff practice and understand such medical and evacuation emergency plans. It is also recommended that each Team stage a pre-season rehearsal to review such procedures. Multilingual capabilities shall also be addressed. Above all, necessary precautions shall be taken to ensure spectator, team and staff safety at all times.

### Injured Player Removal Policy

#### Guidelines for the Referee

Because game officials continue to be in complete charge of game timing, as is common in international competitions, referees will not "stop the clock" for time lost through situations described in Law 7 of the FIFA Laws of the Game (substitution, assessment and removal from the field of injured players, wasting time, or other causes). Instead, the time lost will be managed on the field by the referee who has complete discretion regarding the exact amount of time to be recovered. The intent of Law 7 is to recover time lost due to excessive delays for injuries, substitutions, goal celebrations, and so forth.

Serious injuries, however, are likely to be the most common sort of situation for which the referee is called upon to "add time" at the end of a period of play. The time to be recovered includes the original assessment of the injury and, where necessary, the removal of the injured player from the field by medical personnel.

It is absolutely imperative that athletic trainers and other team staff cooperate with referees in the application of the following FIFA guidelines:

- A. If a player is seriously injured, the referee shall stop play. In cases of head collisions, the referee is to stop play immediately.
- B. After assessing the condition of the injured player, the referee shall authorize one, or, at the most, two medical staff to enter the field to ascertain the type of injury and to arrange the players safe and swift transport off the field (**BUT NOT TO TREAT THE INJURY ON THE FIELD**).
- C. Any player suffering from an open wound is compelled to leave the field to have the wound treated.
- D. To remove the player as quickly as possible, stretcher-bearers shall enter the field with a stretcher immediately upon being beckoned by the referee.
- E. If the referee has determined that the player must leave the field due to injury, whether or not medical personnel has been beckoned to assist the player, the injured player is required to leave the field, either on foot or on the stretcher. If the player refuses to comply, the referee shall caution him for hindering the restart of play.
- F. If a player has received permission from the referee to leave the field during play for treatment of an injury that is serious, that player must have the referee's permission to re-enter the field. If the ball is in play, such a player may only re-enter the field across either of the touchlines. When the ball is out of play, the player may re-enter across any of the boundary lines. Only the referee is authorized to allow an injured player to re-enter the field whether the ball is in play or not.

- G. If a player is bleeding, he must leave the field immediately to have the bleeding stopped and his skin and uniform cleaned as thoroughly as possible (or replace his uniform with a clean one). When the player is ready to return to the game, the referee will inspect the injured area and the uniform for blood or delegate this task to the fourth official. Once a bleeding player is ready to return to the game, he may do so with the referee's permission at any point during play (as opposed to only at a stoppage in play).
- H. If play has been stopped solely for a serious injury with no other breach of the Laws of the Game, the referee shall restart play with a dropped ball.
- I. The referee shall add on time lost on account of injury (with or without medical attention on the field) in full at the end of the half (or overtime period) in question.
- J. If referees feel that the player who has been injured is feigning the injury and returns to play immediately, the referee has the right to caution that player for unsporting behavior.

Regardless, nothing shall be done that would potentially cause further or permanent injury to a player. In the case of on-field injuries, it is incumbent upon the referee and medical personnel to communicate with each other, and to use their best professional judgment in complying with MLS guidelines.

Under no circumstances shall a player be removed if there is an injury to the head, neck, or back until it can be accomplished without risk of further injury or permanent injury to the player. Similar restraint shall be shown for injuries that are deemed to be potentially limb threatening; however, for the majority of less serious injuries, the athletic trainer will oversee the removal of the player from the field. The athletic trainer and the referee shall work together to ensure the safety and well being of the player while trying to return him to play as soon as possible.

### Guidelines for the Athletic Trainer

Adhering to these guidelines, the athletic trainer shall utilize the following Universal Athletic Trainer Hand Signals to facilitate the care of an injured player.

1. Ambulance: Athletic trainer raises hand over head, extends index finger and rotates finger mimicking the lights of an ambulance siren.
2. Physician: With index finger of either hand, athletic trainer points to the corner of his/her ipsilateral eye.
3. Splints: With hands in clenched fists, athletic trainer strikes thumb side of hands together.
4. Spine Board: With hands together, palms open and pronated, athletic trainer moves hands apart as if describing a flat surface.
5. Stretcher: Universal signal employed by all FIFA officials when signaling for a stretcher.

### Disciplinary Procedures

#### Player Misconduct Classifications

For the purposes of referee evaluation and in a continuing effort to educate USL members on the categories of cautions and send-offs, below is a list of the caution-able offenses (mandatory and subjective) utilized by all USL match officials. The following system has been established by FIFA for the purposes of classifying the specific nature of each cautionable offense. Players reaching the caution/yellow card plateaus shall be suspended and fined per the penalties set forth within their specific league.

##### Unsporting Behavior (UB)

- Commits a direct free kick foul in a reckless manner
- Commits a direct free kick foul while tackling for the ball from behind without endangering safety of an opponent
- Commits a tactical foul designed to interfere with or impede an opposing team's attacking play
- Handles the ball deliberately to score a goal
- An act deemed by the referee as bringing the match into disrepute (aggressive attitude, inflammatory behavior or taunting)
- Fakes an injury or exaggerates the seriousness of an injury
- Fakes a foul (dives) or exaggerates the severity of a foul
- Interferes with or prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands into play
- Verbally distracts an opponent during play or at a restart
- Unfairly distracts or impedes an opponent performing a throw-in
- Changes jerseys with the goalkeeper during play or without the referee's permission (both players must be cautioned)
- Engages in trickery to circumvent the goalkeeper's limitation on handling the ball played from a teammates foot (the defender who initiates the "trickery" is cautioned, the decision does not require that the goalkeeper actually handles the ball, and the misconduct can occur during dynamic play or at a restart)
- Makes unauthorized marks on the field
- Removes the jersey after scoring a goal

##### Dissent by word or action (DT)

- Verbally or through action disputes or shows contempt for an official's decision
- If playing as a goalkeeper, leaves the penalty area (not beckoned by the referee) to engage an official in debate regarding a decision

##### Persistent Infringement (PI)

- Repeatedly commits fouls or participates in patterns of fouls directed at an opponent
- Violates Law 14 again, having previously been warned
- If playing as a goalkeeper, wastes time, having previously been warned or penalized for this behavior

##### Delays the restart of play (DR)

- Kicks or throws the ball away or holds the ball to prevent a free kick restart by an opponent
- Kicks or throws the ball away or holds the ball to prevent a throw-in or corner by an opponent
- Fails to restart play after being instructed to do so by the referee or hinders the restart of play
- Excessively celebrates a goal
- Fails to return to the field upon conclusion of the mid-match break, fails to perform a kick-off when signaled to do so by the referee, or fails to be in a correct position for a kick-off
- Fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick (FRD)
- Does not retire at least ten yards away from an opponent's free kick
- Does not retire at least ten yards away from an opponent's corner kick

Enters or re-enters the field of play without the referee's permission (E)

- After having previously been substituted
- After having previously been instructed to leave the field to correct equipment
- After having previously been given permission by the referee to leave the field due to an injury
- After having previously been instructed to leave the field due to bleeding or blood on the uniform
- As a substitute, without having received a signal to do so by the referee

Deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee's permission (L)

- To place an opponent in an apparent offside position
- Other than through the normal course of play

The actions listed above assist in defining the scope of the basis for a caution and can provide a useful guide in identifying the specific behavior that the Laws of the Match consider unacceptable. It is critical, however, for Referees to distinguish between those relatively few actions for which a caution is mandated by the Laws of the Match and the remaining actions for which a caution is discretionary.

### **Player Send-Off Classifications**

A player shall be shown a red card and sent off if he or she commits any of the following seven (7) offenses:

Commits a serious foul play (SFP)

Guilty of violent conduct (VC)

Spits at any person (S)

Denies an opponent of a goal or goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (excluding the Goalkeeper) within his or her own penalty area (DGF)

Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal, punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick (DGF)

Uses offensive, insulting or abusive language (AL)

Receives a second caution in the same match (2CT) – Please identify the actual foul that causes the player to receive the second caution.

### Match Misconduct

#### Coach / Staff Caution & Ejections

Referees at their discretion may warn or dismiss coaches and team staff for unprofessional behavior. Dismissed coaches and staff members are to be escorted directly to the locker rooms and may not return to the field of play. Any coach or other Team Staff member not acting in a professional manner in the opinion of the League, whether or not the incident is reported in the Referee Game Report, shall be subject to a fine and / or suspension. Referees are explicitly instructed not to physically show a red card to non-players.

#### Guidelines for Send-Off (Current Match)

Players and coaches sent off from the field of play shall be met at the sideline at midfield by home team security and escorted to the locker room, and are not permitted to watch the match. They must remain in the locker room for the remainder of the match. Additionally, coaches are not permitted to communicate with their team staff or players during the remainder of the match, and are not allowed to remain in the locker room during halftime. The type of communication prohibited would include: cellular, 2-way radios, electronic / digital, written or verbal. Players or coaches returning to the field of play during or directly following the match are subject to additional sanctions.

#### Serving Suspensions – Players

Any player receiving a straight red card in a regular season match will be suspended for the next league regular season match. Any player receiving a second yellow card in a single match, and thus a red card will be suspended the next league regular season match.

#### Serving Suspensions – Coaches and Team Staff

Any manager, coach, assistant coach, athletic trainer, player, or other official bench personnel is prohibited from assuming any official duty at or near the team bench while serving a suspension. Any athletic trainer sent off during a match should remain in the locker room area through the end of the match and may only return to the pitch at the request of the Referee in the event of an emergency. Any infringement of this rule or the restrictions below may result in the forfeiture of the game and include a fine for each infraction. The following restrictions apply:

##### Pre-Game

Suspended personnel are allowed to communicate pre-game information to the team in the locker room prior to the match. However, they are not allowed on the field during warm-ups and may not stand or in any way be in close proximity to the field of play.

##### In-Game including Halftime

- Field Access – At no time during the game is the suspended person allowed on or around the field of play.
- Communication – There is to be no direct or indirect communication via written, verbal, cellular or electronic to any other coach, player, or staff member on the team bench.
- Stadium Seating – The suspended person must sit in the press box or in some location other than in the stands. The suspended person is not permitted to sit in the stands as a “spectator”. If these accommodations are not available then the suspended person is prohibited from attending the match.
- Locker Room Access – The suspended person is not allowed to be in the locker room at any time during halftime.

##### Post-game

The coach / staff member may join their team in the locker room, but not on the field of play or its surrounding areas.

### **Major Match Misconduct**

In addition to those offenses set forth above, major fines or suspensions, at the sole and absolute discretion of the USL Disciplinary Panel, shall be levied against Players (whether or not they were awarded a card by the Referee), Coaches or other Team Staff for such game conduct as fighting, provoking a fight, criticizing Game Officials with words or gestures, entering the Game Officials' locker room, physical contact with Game Officials separate from Referee Assault, using excessive force, deliberate attempts to injure, spitting, provoking crowd disorders, profane language that can be heard by the crowd or broadcast audience, obscene gestures, improper conduct during the national anthem, taunting, abuse of spectators and others, failure to leave the field when instructed by the Referee to do so, improper conduct following the award of a card, excessive delay tactics or excessive and obvious feigning of injuries, or other unsportsmanlike conduct detrimental to USL. The League may levy fines and / or suspensions for such behavior whether or not it is reported in the Referee Game Report. Video review will weigh heavily in determining/confirming any disciplinary action taken.



## Travel

### Local Travel

Local travel is considered travel that is less than 100 miles roundtrip (from home to venue and back). Within local travel only the match fee is paid. No other expenses may be claimed, including per diem. There is no limit to the number of vehicles used by local officials.

### Non-Local Travel

Unless designated as “Geographically difficult to assign” prior to the season, non-local travel is considered travel that is greater than 100 miles roundtrip (from home to venue and back). Within non-local travel, travel expenses, per diem and the match fee is paid. Officials should travel together when possible if from the same geographic region. When officials do travel together in the same car to the venue, only the driver is eligible for mileage reimbursement.

### Travel after Midnight

Officials on the road after midnight following a match are entitled to a hotel room. This room is to be provided by the host team and must be arranged in advance per above specifications (by contacting team ten (10) days in advance). There are no guarantees for referees who try to arrange hotels at the last minute.

### Multi-match Road Trip

If you are on the road as part of a two match road trip, please invoice the second team for the hotel, not the first team. Reflect the appropriate expense (with receipt) on referee expense report for the second team’s match. It is acceptable to ask the first team to arrange for a room, but officials must pay for it and bill the second team. Please be reasonable!

## Hotel Accommodations

If overnight accommodations are required, it is imperative that you contact the home team Referee Liaison at least ten (10) days in advance of the match to allow the team adequate time to secure a room. If you do not get a response from the team, please notify USL. Teams may (through sponsors) be able to receive a better rate than you could do on your own. Failure to follow this procedure may exempt the team from financial responsibility if the hotel is expensed. It is vital to determine proper procedures for expensing the hotel. Each team has their own way of doing this, and in some instances you may be responsible for paying for the room on your own and expensing the team for reimbursement.

## Game Times

All matches relative to kick-off times are identified on the USSF Game Officials website by local time and on the USL website by Eastern Time (EST).

Atlantic Time (AT)	EST + 1 hour
Central Time (CT)	EST – 1 hour
Mountain Time (MT)	EST – 2 hours
Pacific Time (PT)	EST – 3 hours

### Expense Guidelines

The expense procedures outlined below are for your general information. Any unusual situation (either known before the match or happening afterwards) including failure of the team to make payment of match fees and / or expenses should be emailed to [referee@uslsoccer.com](mailto:referee@uslsoccer.com) or contact appropriate League Director at USL.

### Payment of Referees – completed and / or canceled matches

The fees for officiating matches along with reimbursement of travel expenses are set by USL and subject to regular review. Referees, Assistant Referees and Fourth Officials\* are eligible to be compensated for services and receive full travel expenses if they:

- Arrive at the proper time and perform assigned services.
- Provide signed match reports (Score sheet, Referee Report, and Expense Report) to the referee liaison or other team official. You are advised to make a photocopy of your expense report.
- Arrive at the proper time, but for some reason the match has been already postponed without the referees being properly notified in advance due to an error by the league or teams.
- Arrive at the proper time and either of the competing clubs fails to appear for the match.
- Perform assigned services, but for some reason, the match is not completed.
- Travel to the field, but the match is not played.
- Depart for assigned duties but the match is postponed en route due to inclement weather. In such a case, 100% percent of the travel costs are reimbursed (no match fees will be paid).
- Please refer to “Before Official Arrives at Venue” under the “Match Cancellations” section on Page 4 of this Manual for a list of the steps taken in the cancellation/postponement process.

\*Fourth Officials do not receive travel expenses.

### Completion of Expense Report

In order to receive payments in a timely manner, please complete your expense reports and give them to a team representative prior to the start of the match. That will allow the team enough time to write the check by the completion of the match. Referees should contact the team representative to inform them of anticipated expense and have expense reports completed prior to arriving to match. Officials shall then be paid for those expenses at the conclusion of the match following the above guidelines relating to travel.

Any matters pertaining to the payment (or lack thereof) of fees should be addressed to the appropriate League Director. In the event of a disputed expense item, all remaining match and expense fees are to be paid at the completion of the match and the League is to be notified in writing for a ruling and subsequent payment if applicable.

### Nonpayment of Referee Fees & Expenses

All teams, professional and amateur, are under a strict requirement to pay officials within seven days following a match. Officials must notify the appropriate League Director and USL Referee Contact in the event of non-payment and/or any payment(s) that are returned from a bank.

**W-League Expenses**

**Travel Expenses**

Travel Expenses includes mileage and per diem. In order to claim travel expenses a referee must have non-local travel. Travel expenses may not be claimed for local travel. Travel Expenses may not be claimed by Fourth Officials.

**Mileage Breakdown:**

<u>Center Referee</u>	<u>Assistant Referee</u>	<u>Fourth Official</u>
0 – 100 miles = \$0	0 – 100 miles = \$0	May not be claimed
101 – 200 miles = \$40	*101 – 200 miles = \$20	
201+ miles = \$70	*201+ miles = \$35	

Mileage for a multiple match road trip may be claimed as follows: Home to first venue (roundtrip) – first team pays; first venue to second venue (roundtrip) – second team pays. If any venues are within a local area, no mileage may be claimed. (i.e., venue #2 is less than 100 miles roundtrip from the first venue, no mileage is paid.) Doubleheaders are considered two matches, not one, for purposes of match fees only.

**Per Diem Breakdown:**

<u>Center Referee</u>	<u>Assistant Referee</u>	<u>Fourth Official</u>
1 – 8 hrs: \$10	1 – 8 hrs: \$10	May not be claimed
9 – 16 hrs: \$15	9 – 16 hrs: \$15	
17 – 24 hrs: \$22	17 – 24 hrs: \$22	
25+ hrs: \$30	25+ hrs: \$30	

**Game Fees:**

	<u>Center Referee</u>	<u>Assistant Referee</u>	<u>Fourth Official</u>
Scrimmage	\$50	\$30	\$30
Exhibition	\$90	\$50	\$30
Regular Season	\$90	\$50	\$30
Playoff	\$90	\$50	\$30

Scrimmage

A scrimmage is defined as a non-paid gate match; Fourth Officials are only assigned if requested

Exhibition

An exhibition is defined as a paid-gate match; Fourth Officials are only assigned if requested

Regular Season

Fourth Officials are only assigned if requested

Playoffs

Fourth Officials are only assigned if requested

### **Cross-Over Matches**

The appropriate game fee is determined by the highest level of league affiliation between the opponents. When a W-League team plays a preseason match against an NWSL opponent, NWSL rate are required.

### **College Exhibition Matches**

College teams may not retain officials for games involving USL teams. USL teams are responsible for notifying the League Office in advance of these matches and requests for officials for such games should go through the Local Assignor as determined by appropriate National Federation. There are many college officials who are not registered or trained by the National Federation and these unaffiliated officials should not work a game involving a USL team.

### **International Matches**

Fees shall be established by the National Federation and paid at completion of the match. These matches will be posted by US Soccer on the USSF Game Officials Website and / or distributed by the CSA Referee Department. All travel expenses for these matches will be paid by the team, not through the League office.

## USL Staff Contacts

### General Information

United Soccer Leagues

1715 N. Westshore Blvd., Suite 825

Tampa, FL 33607

Phone: (813) 963-3909

Fax: (813) 963-3807 / (888) 233-1611

Web: [www.USLsoccer.com](http://www.USLsoccer.com)

Referee E-mail: [mike.panter@uslsoccer.com](mailto:mike.panter@uslsoccer.com)

Referee Contact: Mike Panter

### League Operations

W-League

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