GENERAL INFORMATION

CONTEXT OF THE PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT
THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE:
• Officiates grassroots games (youth and adult competitions) in small-sided 7v7, 9v9, and/or 11v11 outdoor fields
• Works primarily with Grassroots Referees (new or experienced)
• Facilitates games for grassroots players (youth and adult)
• Collaborates with coaches with diverse backgrounds (new and experienced coaches, volunteers, etc.) to ensure player safety and responsible spectator behavior

PURPOSE OF THE JOB
THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE:
• Facilitates a fair, fun, and safe game for the players by enforcing and applying the Laws of the Game
• Makes and clearly communicates decisions based on perception and interpretation of player’s actions
• Facilitates understanding and application the Laws of the Game for players and coaches
• Keeps a record of the game (goals scored, misconduct, injuries, etc.)

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES
THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE:
• Prepares prior to the game, manages post-game activities, and reflects on the performance after the game
• Demonstrates leadership characteristics before, during, and after the game
• Takes ownership of self-development through online and field session opportunities offered by U.S. Soccer
• Accepts or declines games in a timely manner
• Ensures that the field conditions are safe
• Officiates and maintains control of the game
• Works together with other match officials in a referee team
• Has final decision-making authority on matters that apply to the Laws of the Game
• Is accountable to the competition authority (youth or adult league, U.S. Soccer)

TASKS AND PROCESSES OF THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE
PREPARING FOR A GAME
• Navigating the game assignment process
• Understanding the game
• Maintaining physical aptitude
• Performing pre-game activities

OFFICIATING A GAME
• Understanding the game
• Making decisions that impact the game
• Demonstrating physical aptitude
• Communicating decisions clearly and confidently
• Leading the referee team

MANAGING POST-GAME ACTIVITIES
• Concluding the game
• Completing the game report(s)

REFLECTING ON THE PERFORMANCE
• Reflecting and evaluating
PRIOR TO THE GAME

The Grassroots Referee is able to prepare for a game and is competent in the below.

**NAVIGATING THE GAME ASSIGNMENT PROCESS**

**THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:**
- Invest in technical equipment
- Use assigning platforms/applications
- Communicate availability to work games
- Gain knowledge about the game assignment process
- Connect with assignor(s)
- Connect with referee team
- Connect with referee coach(es)/mentor(s)
- Invest in appropriate technical equipment (uniform, whistle, cards, flags, etc.)

**OUTCOMES:**
- Professional appearance with appropriate attire and equipment
- Game opportunities to apply knowledge about preparation for games in various competitions, season after season
- Line of communication with assignor(s) and referee colleagues
- Availability of the referee to accept appropriate level games
- Resource for advice about game assignments
- Positive good impression that typically earns respect from players and coaches

**UNDERSTANDING THE GAME**

**THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:**
- Gain knowledge about team tactics that teams may use during the game
- Understand the Laws of the Game and rules of competition
- Understand the level of match management involved in various grassroots competitions
- Understands performance environment applicable to a team(s), club(s), or league (fun, development, win at all cost, etc.)

**OUTCOMES:**
- Game plan that addresses:
  - the expectations from players and coaches
  - positioning and movement adjusted to team tactics
  - signals, mechanics, and decision making
- Prepare for decision making to promote a fair, fun, and safe environment
- Prepare for decision making to maintain control of the game
- Understand the meaning of reading the game

**MAINTAINING PHYSICAL APTITUDE**

**THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:**
- Gain knowledge about basic physical fitness
- Understand the physical demands of the game
- Identify information about nutrition, rest, and recovery, and their relation to fitness
- Identify information about warm up and cool down drills for before and after the game
- Attend referee field sessions in their local area and/or competitions (youth and adult, U.S. Soccer, etc.)
- Understand the environmental considerations (weather) surrounding outdoor training sessions (hydration, equipment, etc.)

**OUTCOMES:**
- A training plan to reach personal goals related to fitness
- Awareness of fitness for the performance environments in grassroots competitions
- Develop a warmup and cool down routine for before and after the game, respectively
- Self-comfort and self-confidence to lead the accepted game at current level of fitness
- Use preventative approaches to prepare for the performance environment
PRIOR TO THE GAME

PERFORMING PRE-GAME ACTIVITIES

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

• Actively participate with the referee team in a pre-game conference and in conducting pre-game inspections (the field of play, the game ball, and the player’s equipment)
• Actively participate with the referee team in checking the rosters and checking-in players and coaches
• Connect with coaches and players via check-in, pre-game conference, and/or coin toss
• Actively participate with the referee team in a group and individual warmup prior to the game

OUTCOMES:

• Ensured safety prior to the game in collaboration with players and coaches
• Environment of cooperation prior to the game to promote positive sporting behavior
• Ensured low risk of injury during a game for the referee team
• Positive relationship with referee team during pregame activities and to prepare to work as a team during the game
The Grassroots Referee is able to officiate games and is competent in the below.

### Making Decisions That Impact the Game

**The Grassroots Referee Is Able To:**
- Perceive, interpret, and make decisions on the field of play (including fouls)
- Make split-second decisions based on the collected information
- Scan and use position and movement of players as cues for taking optimal position
- Use FIFA Considerations to interpret players’ actions (challenges, handball, offenses, etc.)
- Collaborate with the referee team to make decisions during the game
- Make decisions based on the current and relevant Laws of the Game and rules of competition

**Outcomes:**
- Application of decision-making process for the match official
- Consistency of decisions during a match
- Optimal position to witness the action (first step of decision-making process)
- Increased consistency and accuracy of decision on the field
- Clear and confident communication with players, coaches, others in the field
- Teamwork
- Application of the Laws of the Game
- Informed decisions and not guessing
- Safety and control of the game
- Safe, fair, and fun environment

### Understanding the Game

**The Grassroots Referee Is Able To:**
- Have a basic understanding of team tactics
- Read the game by recognizing each team’s general style of play (and team tactics)
- Recognizes key players (by technical skill, position, speed, behavior, etc.)
- Recognize potential conflicts
- Apply the Laws of the Game based on observed players’ actions and considerations for interpretation
- Apply knowledge about advantage, offside, fouls, misconduct, restarts, etc.
- Understands the role of the coach and team officials and recognizes responsible and irresponsible behavior

**Outcomes:**
- Adapted decision-making to fit the game and players’ needs for fair, fun, and safe environment
- Improved positioning and movement to witness the action (first step of making decision)
- Positively managed game for players, coaches, spectators, and referee team
- Basic management of coaches and technical area where appropriate
- Relationships that help manage players’ behavior, emotions, etc.
- Recognize actions to prevent escalation
- Clear and confident communication with players and coaches
- Recognize clues for anticipation about where to move for the next phase of play

### Demonstrating Physical Aptitude

**The Grassroots Referee Is Able To:**
- Keep up with the pace of the game
- Apply various speeds (jog/run/sprint) and directional changes based on level of play and teams’ tactics

**Outcomes:**
- Improved positioning and movement to see between players
- Proximity and angle of view to active play
- Proximity to manage players’ emotions when needed
DURING THE GAME

COMMUNICATING CLEARLY AND CONFIDENTLY

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

• Demonstrate calm, confident body language when communicating public decisions
• Manage player and coach behavior with verbal and non-verbal communication
• Communicates decisions using signals, body language, and tools (flags, whistle, etc.)

OUTCOMES:

• Display of confidence in decision and clarity of the decision
• Clear, public communication of decisions
• Player or coach behavior refocused to their role in the game

LEADING THE REFEREE TEAM

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

• Establish the standard for foul selection on the field
• Establish the standard for misconduct
• Collaborate with colleagues to make decisions that are of the view of the referee
• Take initiative to make decisions that contribute to overall game management (whether Referee, AR, or 4th Official)
• Keep a record of the game (goals, cards, injuries, etc.) in conjunction with the referee team

OUTCOMES:

• Consistent referee team foul and misconduct selection
• Increased awareness and correct decisions by the referee team
• Collaboration between referee team
AFTER THE GAME

The Grassroots Referee is able to manage post-game activities, reflect on the performance, and is competent in the below.

CONCLUDING THE GAME

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

• Carry out post-game activities (gather game balls, join rest of the referee team in the field of play, monitor opposing players)
• Lead the referee team to collect and verify relevant information for the game report
• Return player passes and signed roster when applicable

OUTCOMES:

• Smooth transition from end of the game to post-game activities
• Increased accuracy and clarity of report(s) for competition authority
• Report that meets the standards of the competition and/or recommendations by U.S. Soccer

COMPLETING THE GAME REPORT(S)

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

• Confirm the accuracy of the report information with other members of the referee team for the game
• Document all required information (score, substitutions, misconduct, etc.) in the referee game report
• Recognize and submit when a supplemental referee game report is needed by the competition authority
• Review and confirm that the information in the report(s) is clear and that the language in the Laws of the Game is used
• Submit completed report(s) on time to the competition authority and other administrative roles (assignor, SRC, etc.)

OUTCOMES:

• Understanding the aspects of submitting reports and areas for improvement
• Knowledge about basic components of submitting reports as recommended by U.S. Soccer

REFLECTING AND EVALUATING

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

• Review their individual performance
• Review their performance as a team
• Engage with referee coach/mentor/peers (referee team) when feedback is offered
• Understand the importance of lifelong learning
• Recognize and understand areas for improvement related to habits or incidents during the game

OUTCOMES:

• Identification of positive aspects in the performance and areas for improvement
• Continued growth (emotional and technical) as a referee
• Cultivation of relationships within the soccer referee community
• Participation in development opportunities
• Consultation of resources to assist with development of competencies of the grassroots referee (referee coach, mentor, assignor, LOTG, online, etc.)
• Identification of next steps and development plan to practice prior to the next game
• Application of new knowledge and behavior during the next game experience
• Increased comfort and confidence performing the tasks of the referee and demonstrating competencies for each of the tasks