



FC Arizona Statement About Referees

FC Arizona is a fast-growing competitive soccer club in Arizona. As such, it is important that we recognize the roles that all components of the game play in advancing our sport. The State of Arizona is suffering from a referee shortage. Part of this is because the sport is growing so rapidly in the State. However, the other part is due to the lack of referees. What most people do not understand is that this is not due to a lack of incentive or interest. It is largely because of the actions of sideline participants.

As a Club, we need to understand the facts about the referee situation in Arizona. FC Arizona plans to play an integral part in helping fill the void of referees in the State and in fostering the growth of the referee community. Helping parents understand the current referee environment is important in advancing the sport and the role of our players within it. So, here are some of the facts:

- You can be as young as 12 to referee
- Whether you are a sideline referee or a center ref or managing an entire game at younger ages, referees can be paid a minimum of \$25 per game and up to \$50 per game, tax-free, which is a substantial pay rate for the age group of 12-18
- Only 30% of people under the age of 18 that get certified to become a referee will work more than 5 games
- When coaches and players get into a disagreement with the referees, there is an available consequence, which is that the referee can issue a yellow or red card to the coach or player
- On average, qualified referees do not stop judging games because of players or coaches
- No referee enters a game with a hope of expelling a parent, and there are no available consequence to them for dealing with parent involvement other than expulsion
- 70% of referees that quit cite parent berating and involvement as the reason
- No one is perfect

The State is exploring options with the community whereby each registered Club will have to post a bond. The Club will then need to have 10% of its players certify to be referees and work games. If they meet that criteria, the bond will be returned. We are supportive of something along these lines, and also ask that our parents not participate in berating and casting repeated attacks on referees during games. It is acceptable to voice your immediate thoughts about a call, but it is not acceptable to expand the conversation beyond that, and certainly not to threaten, berate, or cause concern to any referee for doing their jobs to the best of their abilities.

We need a vibrant and growing referee community to match the growth rate of the sport of soccer here in the State, and as a Club, we expect that all players, Coaches, and parents make their best effort in this regard.