

## 2019-20 Simplified Explanation to IFAB's Major Changes to the

### LAWS OF THE GAME

You may view the clarification and summary as provided by IFAB [on our D&A Education page](#).

#### Overview

There are many changes and revisions listed below. The referee community, coaches, and players are all required to review these changes before they are implemented.

Please allow everyone a little leeway in this transitional period. There may be mistakes made in interpretation and implementation, however, working together to learn and improve will help the game!

#### Law 3 – Substitution Procedures

“A player who is being substituted must leave the field by the nearest point on the touchline/goal line (unless the referee indicates the player can leave quickly/ immediately at the halfway line or a different point because of safety, injury etc.).”

#### Simplified

*If a player is on the bench side of the field, they may leave the field by simply stepping off the field – they don't have to come to halfway line.*

*If a player is on the far spectator side of the field, they may leave that side of the field, immediately returning to their bench area – or in the case of safety issues or concerns, (unless otherwise indicated by the referee) must leave quickly and immediately over the bench side line. If the referee believes any delaying tactic is being used, the player could be subject to a caution for unsportsmanlike conduct.*

*The speed at which players are substituted for injury will be at the discretion of the referee.*

**NOTE: As agreed upon by the NCYSA Executive Board and NCSRA:**

#### **SUBSTITUTION RULE CHANGE GUIDANCE FOR NCYSA GAMES**

*The substitution law has been adjusted to require players being subbed to leave the field at the nearest point, UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE REFEREE. For all NCYSA matches NCSRA is directing the referees to direct players being replaced by an incoming substitute to leave the field on the bench side of the field close to the halfway line or their own bench area, unless for medical treatment or other cause it makes more sense in the referee's discretion to have the player leave the field from some other point.*

#### Law 4 – The Players' Equipment

“Multi-coloured/patterned undershirts are allowed if they are the same as the sleeve of the main shirt.”

#### Simplified

*If your jersey sleeve is 'blue', then your undershirt must be blue. If your jersey sleeve is 'plaid', then your undershirt must be the same plaid.*

## **Law 5 – The Referee**

“The referee may not change a restart decision on realizing it is incorrect or on the advice of another match official if play has restarted or the referee has signaled the end of the first or second half (including extra time) and left the field of play or abandoned the match. However, if at the end of the half, the referee leaves the field of play to go to the referee review area (RRA) or to instruct the players to return to the field of play, this does not prevent a decision being changed for an incident which occurred before the end of the half.”

### **Simplified**

*The referee may not change a restart decision if the play has restarted. However, If the AR or 4<sup>th</sup> official notices misconduct before a restart, and indicates a YC/RC offense to the referee and referee does not see/hear the AR or the 4<sup>th</sup> official, and the referee restarts play, (or blows the whistle for half-time, for the end of game whistle, or has abandoned the match), the referee may still act on that misconduct. However, the restart associated with the misconduct will not be applied.*

### **Yellow and Red Cards**

“The referee takes action against team officials who fail to act in a responsible manner and warns, or shows a yellow card for a caution or a red card for a sending off from the field of play and its immediate surrounds, including the technical area; if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction. A medical team official who commits a sending-off offence may remain if (...)”

### **Simplified**

*In the past, adult coaches (team officials) engaging in misconduct were verbally warned or verbally sent off. Now team officials engaged in misconduct can be shown the yellow and red cards. If the offending person on the team bench area cannot be identified, then the head coach will be given the appropriate sanction at the time of incident.*

*The statement “A medical team official . . .” is more than likely included for professional-type matches. In NCYSA sanctioned matches any adult engaging in misconduct will be subject to being cautioned or sent off.*

### **Injuries**

“An injured player may not be treated on the field of play (...). Exceptions to the requirement to leave the field of play are only when: a penalty kick has been awarded and the injured player will be the kicker.”

### **Simplified**

*If the injured player is the player taking an ensuing penalty kick, then they may receive treatment on the field and the player may stay on the field and does not have to leave the field*

*We believe all teams, referees, coaches and spectators will use common sense when attempting to move an injured player from the field and always defer to medical staff if present.*

## **Law 7 - Duration of the Match**

### **Allowance for lost time**

“Medical stoppages permitted by competition rules e.g. ‘drinks’ breaks (which should not exceed one minute) and ‘cooling’ breaks (ninety seconds to three minutes).”

### **Simplified**

*In the interest of player safety, in certain weather conditions (high humidity and temperatures) competition rules may allow a cooling break, to get the body temperature down) may last from 90 seconds to 3 minutes. A water/drink break may not exceed one-minute.*

## **Law 8 – Start and Restart of Play**

“The team that wins the toss of a coin decides which goal to attack in the first half or to take the kick-off.

Depending on the above, their opponents take the kick-off or decide which goal to attack in the first half.

The team that decided which goal to attack in the first half takes the kick-off to start the second half.”

### **Simplified**

*At coin toss a team may decide to take the kick-off OR which goal to attack. If the team decides which goal to attack at the beginning of the match, they will take the kick-off to start the second half.*

### **Kick-Off**

“If the player taking the kick-off touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick, or for a handball offence a direct free kick, is awarded.”

*Self-explanatory.*

### **Drop Ball**

“The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped: the ball was in the penalty area or the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area

In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent or, as outlined in Law 9.1, a match official.

All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play.

The ball is in play when it touches the ground.”

### **Simplified**

*If the ball is in the penalty area or the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area and play is stopped, causing a drop ball, the ball will be dropped to the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area for restart.*

*If the ball is NOT in the penalty area, the ball will be dropped by the referee to one player on the team that LAST TOUCHED THE BALL, in that same area. All other players of both teams must*

*remain at least 4.5 yds from the ball until it is in play (when the ball touches the ground). The same drop ball will occur if the ball is touched by an outside agent or the match official.*

## **Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play**

“The ball is out of play when:

It touches a match official, remains on the field of play and:

- a team starts a promising attack or
- the ball goes directly into the goal or
- the team in possession of the ball changes.

In all these cases, play is restarted with a dropped ball.”

### **Simplified**

*Basically, if the ball hits the referee and remains on the field of play causing a promising attack, a goal or change of possession, there will be a drop ball.*

## **The Ball In Play**

“The ball is in play at all other times when it touches a match official and when it rebounds off a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag post and remains on the field of play.”

### **Simplified**

*If the ball touches a match official and when it rebounds off a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag post and remains on the field of play, the ball is still in play.*

## **Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match**

### **Goal Scored**

“A goal is scored, provided that no offence has been committed by the team scoring the goal. If the goalkeeper throws the ball directly into the opponents’ goal, a goal kick is awarded.”

### **Simplified**

*The goalkeeper may not score by throwing the ball into the opponents’ goal. The restart will be a goal kick.*

## **Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct**

### **Handball**

“It is an offence if a player:

- deliberately touches the ball with their hand/arm, including moving the hand/arm towards the ball
- gains possession/control of the ball after it has touched their hand/arm and then:
  - scores in the opponents’ goal
  - creates a goal-scoring opportunity
- scores in the opponents’ goal directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper

It is usually an offence if a player:

- touches the ball with their hand/arm when:
  - the hand/arm has made their body unnaturally bigger

- the hand/arm is above/beyond their shoulder level (unless the player deliberately plays the ball which then touches their hand/arm)

The above offences apply even if the ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from the head or body (including the foot) of another player who is close.

Except for the above offences, it is not usually an offence if the ball touches a player's hand/arm:

- directly from the player's own head or body (including the foot)
- directly from the head or body (including the foot) of another player who is close
- if the hand/arm is close to the body and does not make the body unnaturally bigger
- when a player falls and the hand/arm is between the body and the ground to support the body, but not extended laterally or vertically away from the body"

## **Simplified**

*If a player deliberately touches the ball with the hand or arm, it is a handball.*

*If the player gains possession/control of the ball from their hand/arm (even if accidental), then scores in the opponent's goal or creates a scoring opportunity, it's a handball.*

*If a player scores directly from the ball hitting their hand or arm, even if by accident, it's a handball.*

*It's usually a handball when a player touches the ball with their hand or arm when the hand or arm make their body 'unnaturally bigger' (extended arms and/or hands). The above offenses apply if the ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from the head or body of another player who is close.*

*It may not be a handball:*

- *when the ball touches the player's hand/arm directly from their own head or body, including when they are trying to clear the ball away from their own defensive area;*
- *when the ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from the head or body of another player who is close;*
- *when the ball touches the player's hand/arm while it is held close to their body (not making themselves unnaturally bigger);*
- *when the ball touches the player's hand/arm while the player is falling – and the hand/arm is directly between the player and the ground to offer support from the fall (not extended laterally or vertically).*

## **Goalkeeper Handling the Ball**

"The goalkeeper has the same restrictions on handling the ball as any other player outside the penalty area. If the goalkeeper handles the ball inside their penalty area when not permitted to do so, an indirect free kick is awarded but there is no disciplinary sanction."

## **Simplified**

*A goalkeeper cannot handle the ball from a deliberate pass or throw in from a teammate inside their penalty area. The result is an Indirect Free Kick. However, there is no disciplinary sanction (yellow or red card) – even if it stops a promising attack, goal-scoring opportunity, or denies a goal.*

## **Indirect Free Kick for Goalkeeper Handling the Ball**

“An indirect free kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, commits any of the following offences:

- touches the ball with the hand/arm, unless the goalkeeper has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after:
  - it has been deliberately kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate
  - receiving it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate.”

### **Simplified**

*An indirect free kick awarded inside the penalty area if the ball is passed (or throw in) to the goalkeeper by a teammate if the GK touches the ball with hands/arm. However, if they Attempt to clear/kick the ball, but the ball hits them in the hand or arm, it is determined the goalkeeper was NOT trying to handle the ball and they may now catch the ball without offense.*

### **Delaying the Restart of Play to Show a Card**

“Once the referee has decided to caution or send off a player, play must not be restarted until the sanction is administered, unless the non-offending team takes a quick free kick, has a clear goal-scoring opportunity and the referee has not started the disciplinary sanction procedure. The sanction is administered at the next stoppage; if the offence was denying the opposing team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, the player is cautioned.”

### **Simplified**

*If the referee has not started the disciplinary procedure (the yellow or red card process) the non-offending team may take a quick free kick if they have a clear goal-scoring opportunity. The sanction then can be administered at the next stoppage of play.*

*NOTE: If the offense was a DOGSO (Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity), AND the non-offending team (that has control of the restart) decide to take a quick free kick, the referee will then sanction the player committing the DOGSO on the next stoppage of play. The player will then be cautioned – not sent off, as the quick restart is similar to advantage and play continues.*

### **Celebration of a Goal**

“A player must be cautioned, even if the goal is disallowed.”

#### *Simplified*

*Yellow card cautions for inappropriate goal celebrations apply even if the goal is disallowed just as if the goal was awarded.*

### **Team Official – Disciplinary Actions**

“Where an offence is committed and the offender cannot be identified, the senior team coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction.”

### **Warnings**

“The following offences should usually result in a warning; repeated or blatant offences should result:

- in a caution or sending-off:
- entering the field of play in a respectful/non-confrontational manner
- failing to cooperate with a match official e.g. ignoring an instruction/request from
- assistant referee or the fourth official

- minor/low-level disagreement (by word or action) with a decision
- occasionally leaving the confines of the technical area without committing another offence

## **Caution**

Caution offences include (but are not limited to):

- clearly/persistently not respecting the confines of their team's technical area
- delaying the restart of play by their team
- deliberately entering the technical area of the opposing team (non-confrontational)
- dissent by word or action including:
  - throwing/kicking drinks bottles or other objects
  - gestures which show a clear lack of respect for the match official(s) e.g. sarcastic clapping
- entering the referee review area (RRA)
- excessively/persistently gesturing for a red or yellow card
- excessively showing the TV signal for a VAR 'review'
- gesturing or acting in a provocative or inflammatory manner
- persistent unacceptable behavior (including repeated warning offences)
- showing a lack of respect for the game

## **Sending-off**

Sending-off offences include (but are not limited to):

- delaying the restart of play by the opposing team e.g. holding onto the ball, kicking
- the ball away, obstructing the movement of a player
- deliberately leaving the technical area to:
  - show dissent towards, or remonstrate with, a match official
  - act in a provocative or inflammatory manner
- enter the opposing technical area in an aggressive or confrontational manner
- deliberately throwing/kicking an object onto the field of play
- entering the field of play to:
  - confront a match official (including at half-time and full-time)
  - interfere with play, an opposing player or match official
- entering the video operation room (VOR)
- physical or aggressive behavior (including spitting or biting) towards an opposing
- player, substitute, team official, match official, spectator or any other person (e.g.
- ball boy/girl, security or competition official etc.)
- receiving a second caution in the same match
- using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures using
- unauthorized electronic or communication equipment and/or behaving in an
- inappropriate manner as the result of using electronic or communication equipment
- violent conduct."

## **Simplified**

*As stated previously, Team Officials will now be shown yellow and red cards for misconduct. If the person engaged in misconduct in the bench area cannot be identified, the head coach/senior team official will receive the sanction.*

*The above lists of Warnings, Cautions, and Send-Offs are at the determination of the referee.*

## **Restart of Play After Fouls and Misconduct**

“The ball is in play and a player commits a physical offence inside the field of play against:

- an opponent – indirect or direct free kick or penalty kick
- a team-mate, substitute, substituted or sent off player, team official, match official
  - direct free kick or penalty kick
- any other person – dropped ball

All verbal offences are penalized with an indirect free kick.”

## **Simplified**

*Confirmation that all verbal offenses are penalized with an indirect free kick.*

*Also, if an offense is committed outside the field of play by a player against a player, substitute, substituted player, or team official of the player’s team (offense is committed between individuals on the SAME team), play is restarted with an indirect free kick on the boundary line closest to where the offense occurred.*

## **Kicking Objects and the Restart**

“If a player who is on or off the field of play throws or kicks an object (other than the match ball) at an opposing player, or throws or kicks an object (including a ball) at an opposing substitute, substituted or sent off player, or team official, or a match official or the match ball, play is restarted with a direct free kick.”

*Self-Explanatory*

## **Indirect Free Kick**

“The referee indicates an indirect free kick by raising the arm above the head; this signal is maintained until the kick has been taken and the ball touches another player, or goes out of play or it is clear that a goal cannot be scored directly.”

## **Simplified**

*The referee does not need to maintain the IDFK signal (arm in the air) if the kick taken is too far from the opposing goal (e.g. too far away to score).*

**Law 13 – Free Kicks** “The ball:

- is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves”

## **Simplified**

*If a free kick is being taken by a team in their own penalty area, once the ball is kicked and clearly moves, it is in play. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area and at least 10 yds. away until the ball is in play.*

*If a free kick is taken by the defending team inside its penalty area, any opponents are inside the penalty area, touches or challenges for the ball before it is in play, the free kick is retaken.*



*If after the ball is in play, the kicker touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded.*

### **Players and the Wall**

“Where three or more defending team players form a ‘wall’, all attacking team players must remain at least 1m (1 yd.) from the ‘wall’ until the ball is in play.”

### **Simplified**

*When three or more defending team players form a wall, all attacking players must no longer embed themselves into the opponents’ “wall” and must remain at least 1 yard away from the wall until the ball is in play. Opposing players guilty of being within 1 yard of the wall will cause a restart of an indirect free kick.*

### **Law 14 - The Penalty Kick**

“The ball must be stationary on the penalty mark and the goalposts, crossbar and goal net must not be moving.

The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, without touching the goalposts, crossbar or goal net, until the ball has been kicked.

The player taking the penalty kick must kick the ball forward; back heeling is permitted provided the ball moves forward. When the ball is kicked, the defending goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot touching, or in line with, the goal line.” Once the referee has signaled for a penalty kick to be taken, the kick must be taken, if it not taken the referee may take disciplinary action before signaling again for the kick to be retaken.

### **Simplified**

*The referee must not signal for the penalty kick to be taken if the goalkeeper is touching the goalposts, crossbar, or net, or if they are moving. Goalkeepers are not allowed to stand in front or behind the line and must have part of one-foot touching or in line with the goal line.*

*If an offense occurs after the referee has signaled for a penalty kick to be taken but before the kick is taken, a free kick cannot be awarded as the ball has not been put into play. The necessary disciplinary action can still be taken by the referee.*

### **Law 15 – The Throw-In**

“All opponents must stand at least 2m (2 yds.) from the point at which on the touchline where the throw-in is to be taken.

If, after the ball is in play, the thrower touches the ball again before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded.”

### **Simplified**

*Opponents must be 2 yds. from the touchline where the throw is being taken. If the player throwing the ball touches the ball again before it touches another player, an indirect free kick is awarded. If the thrower commits a handball offense, then a direct free kick or penalty kick is awarded if inside the thrower’s penalty area.*

### **Law 16 - The Goal Kick**

“The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.”

### **Simplified**

*The ball does not have to leave the penalty area to be in play.*

*Opponents must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play. However, if the kicking team takes a quick goal kick and opponents have not had time to leave the penalty area, the referee will allow play to continue. If the opponents who are inside the penalty area or enter the penalty area before the ball is in play, touch or challenge for the ball before it is in play, the goal kick is retaken.*