

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

SOCCER OFFICIATING UPDATE

It has been brought to the attention of the CIF Southern Section Office that several member schools have been contacted by six area units of the Southern California Soccer Officials Association. These six units have demanded a response from these schools as to their willingness to work for a rate that is outside of the CIF Southern Section Blue Book allowed structure.



A memo was sent from my office to all schools on September 12 with the section's response to their proposal. This memo included the process of how each sports officiating pay structure was determined, the thinking behind it, the CIF Southern Section Council's overwhelming approval of it and the discussions with Southern California Soccer Official's leadership regarding it since.

As outlined in that memo, by CIF Southern Section bylaws, the section office is not able to evaluate and adjust individual sports fees outside the established timelines. Additionally, member schools are also not allowed to deviate from established officials' fee structure clearly outlined in the Blue Book. It would be a violation of CIF Southern Section bylaws to pay an official more or less than what is currently defined.

We have been informed that during the 2023-2024 winter soccer season, some soccer officials in your area may boycott their assigned games or not accept assignments entirely in protest of the current fee structure. If this takes place, schools have these options:

CIF Southern Section Bylaw 1219: When an assigned official fails to appear, the contest should be played, and it will be the responsibility of the host school to provide either an alternate CIF Southern Section official or a mutually agreed upon qualified person to officiate the contest at all levels of competition.

1. Assistant Coaches May Officiate the Games - If both schools agree, a coach from each team may officiate both varsity and lower-level games; the result will count.
2. Re-Schedule the Contest - If coaches and/or school administration do not feel comfortable for any reason in playing a game with an alternate official or assistant coaches officiating the game, the contest should be postponed and rescheduled if possible.
3. If you have contact information for qualified individuals in or outside of your area that are willing to work, you may contact them.
4. Contact your local university or the Southern California Intermural Officials Association (SCIOA) and determine if there is a university near you that is a National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) officiating group interested and qualified (both rules and insurance wise) to work your games. The following universities have NIRSA programs:

Cal Poly Pomona
UC Irvine
UC Santa Barbara
Cal State Northridge

Long Beach State
Cal Baptist University
Cal State San Marcos
UC San Diego

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Soccer Officials (Cont.):

Cal State San Bernardino
UCLA
USC
Loyola Marymount University

Pepperdine
UC Riverside
Cal State Fullerton
San Diego State

We are also aware of concerns around ejections regarding replacement officials and how they are to be handled. There should be no deviation from the normal protocol and the CIF-SS will handle these the same way they are adjudicated currently. It is imperative that coaches understand the situation should a substitute referee be officiating their game and reinforce appropriate expectations for player conduct, bench behavior and parent/fan interaction.

In all cases, we encourage you to work with your campus and/or district risk management department if you have any question.

We are certain schools and leagues will continue to be contacted by these units. As individual schools you can choose to respond how you would like to respond to any correspondence from the soccer officials or ignore it entirely but as we've stated, as member schools, you are not allowed to go outside of Bluebook bylaws.

We hope the dispute regarding the current Soccer Officials Fee Structure does not significantly impact the athletes in our section who are counting on everyone involved to maximize their individual athletic experience. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office.

Taylor Martinez – CIF-SS Communications Coordinator

Taylor Martinez joined the CIF Southern Section team in September 2023 as the Communications Coordinator. Prior to joining our team, Taylor taught Multimedia in her hometown at Apple Valley High School. Her background also includes working for companies such as NBC Palm Springs, KTLA 5 News and The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. Taylor is a proud alumna of California State University, Fullerton, and Arizona State University. Tusks and Forks up for Taylor! She is looking forward to being out in the field interacting with athletes and their families to share unique stories across Southern California. Have a story idea you'd like to share with her? Email her at taylor@m@cifss.org or find her on Instagram @cifsstaylor. Welcome, Taylor!

Thank you for all of your support and should you need anything, please feel free to reach out and call.

All the best,



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