



2024/2025 REFEREE INFORMATION

The 2025 USSF license year opened on July 1, 2024 and will run until June 30, 2025.

The 2024 license year saw a much needed increase of 106 referees over 2023. There were 87 potential referees still in the roster of the beginner online course that did not complete it prior to the in-person field session deadlines. The last time Montana had over 600 certified referees was in 2015.

We **MUST** continue to encourage, promote and support the need for new referees and for referees to return. Studies have shown that it takes three years for a new referee to become really comfortable with the job, learn the game and stick around for the long term. This requires encouragement, mentoring, positive soccer environments, and room/grace for mistakes to be made.

There is nearly a 50/50 chance your referee is a first year!

NEW REFEREE INFORMATION:

There will be two options for 2025 for new referees.

Both options require new referees to be 13 when registering.

Option 1: Online Clinic and In-Person Field Session - \$60

Option 2: USSF Digital Referee (All Online) - \$40 (+ BG Check)

Option 1 is the same as it has been the last few years. There is a USSF course, MT supplemental lessons on things like the BOL, U12 Heading, etc., safe playing environments, a test and Background Check + SafeSport for those over 18.

Option 2 is a new license from USSF called Digital Referee, intended to grow numbers at the grassroots level of soccer. The course is all online, plus SafeSport for those over 18. There is no in-person requirement, which may be ideal for some of our remote areas that may not have enough new referees to warrant the costs to run a referee field session.

2024 Referees Numbers

USSF Certified Referees: 631

Referee (Grassroots): 618

Referee Advanced: 7

Regional Emeritus: 5

National Emeritus: 1

Recertified: 334 (53%)

New/Returning: 297 (47%)

Did Not Recertify: 194 (37%)

3-Years Certified: 224 (35%)

2024 Referees by District

Billings: 126 (+19.8%)

Bitterroot: 28 (+42.9%)

Bozeman: 76 (+10.5%)

Butte: 6 (+16.7%)

Clark Fork: 11 (-18.2%)

Eastern Montana: 15 (-33.3%)

Flathead: 80 (+16.3%)

Great Falls: 28 (-3.6%)

Helena: 86 (+19.8%)

Hi-Line: 5 (+60%)

Kootenai: 13 (-15.4%)

Lewistown: 10 (+0%)

Livingston: 35 (+25.7%)

Missoula: 99 (+35.4%)

Polson: 9 (-88.9%)

This referee will mainly start with recreational youth and adult games. They may officiate competitive games if they have been observed by a mentor and recommended for more difficult matches. A Digital Referee will take a “Bridge” course their second year to move to a regular referee license.

HOST A NEW REFEREE CLINIC:

New referees should be directed to <https://mtsra.org/new-referees> to find/register for a clinic.

If your club would like to host a new referee, 4-hour field session, there are instructions on the page linked above. Field sessions must have 6 or more registrations within 24 hours of the scheduled time, completed with the online course, or it may be postponed or canceled. If a clinic is canceled, they can transfer to another field session. Assignors and mentors may also request to host a field session, so be sure to keep an open line of communication with your local resources.

RECERTIFYING REFEREES:

Referee recertification is completely online. Questions about the process may be answered at: <https://mtsra.org/recertifying-referees>. The cost for this year is \$60. Referees will review all law changes

ASSIGNR.COM ASSIGNMENT PLATFORM:

Spring 2024 included a change in referee assignment platform to <https://montana.assignr.com/>. The software is fully integrated with USSF and OMS so new referees have accounts automatically and the system checks USSF for licenses. All MYSA matches were assigned and paid directly through Assignr.

There were some small hiccups here and there as we learned the software and some major upgrades have happened in that short time as well. Unfortunately, this feature was a month late but better late than never... This fall, referees will be able to designate the Site/Venue(s) that they are available to officiate at on a day by day basis.

Available Times for Saturday, August 3

All Day	From	Until	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8am	3pm	Remove

Add a Note

I Am Only Available For...

* Fort Missoula Regional Park

Leave this blank to be available for any site, venue, or venue area.

Available Times for Saturday, August 10

All Day	From	Until	
<input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 AM	3:00 PM	Remove

Add a Note

Traveling with Strikers FC 2011 Girls

I Am Only Available For...

* Bozeman Bronken Park Soccer Complex

Leave this blank to be available for any site, venue, or venue area.

Assignr is registered to the Montana Referee Program and is available to all clubs for local use with friendlies, recreational leagues, tournaments, etc. Clubs may set up a bank account to pay officials via direct deposit instead of tracking cash with only a few clicks each week.

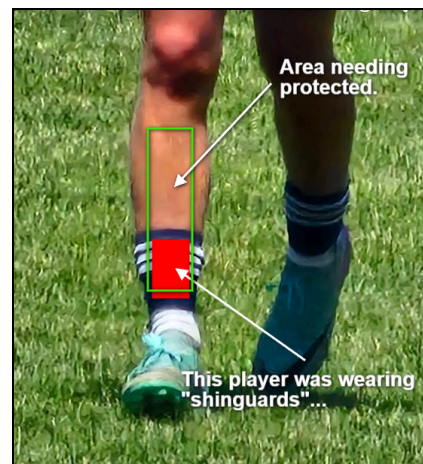
2024/2025 IFAB CHANGES TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME:

Law 1 (The Field): Goal Line Technology Clarification

Law 3 (Players): Competitions permitted additional permanent concussion substitutions.

Law 3/4 (Players): Each team must have a captain on the field who wears an identifying armband.(Fall 2025 Enforcement)

Law 4 (Players' Equipment): Players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shin guards, must provide reasonable protection and be covered by socks. (Image to the right was taken at Presidents Cup.) Gloves and Keeper track bottoms were moved to "Other equipment" to show that they are not compulsory equipment."



Law 12 (Fouls and Misconduct): Non-deliberate handball offenses are usually the result of a player attempting to play fairly, so when a penalty kick is awarded for such offenses, the same philosophy should apply as for offenses (fouls) which are an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball, i.e. DOGSO offenses result in a yellow card and SPA offenses result in no card. Deliberate handball remains a red-card offense when a penalty kick is awarded, as it is similar to holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.

Law 14 (The Penalty Kick): The ball must touch or overhang the center of the penalty mark.

Law 14 (The Penalty Kick):
Encroachment by players will only be penalized if it has an impact on either the kicker, the keeper or a goal being scored or missed by challenging for the ball.

Player encroachment can be difficult to detect and manage, especially at the lower levels of the game, where there may be no neutral assistant referees. Since encroachment rarely affects the outcome of the kick (only if the ball rebounds into play), the same principle should apply to player encroachment as to goalkeeper encroachment, i.e. it is penalized only if it has an impact.

	Outcome of the penalty kick	
	Goal	No goal
Encroachment by attacking player	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact: indirect free kick No impact: no retake
Encroachment by defending player	Impact: goal No impact: goal	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: no retake
Encroachment by defending and attacking player	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: no retake
Offence by goalkeeper	Goal	Not saved: penalty is not retaken (unless kicker is clearly impacted) Saved: penalty is retaken and warning for goalkeeper; caution for any further offence(s)
Goalkeeper and kicker offend at the same time	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Ball kicked backwards	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
'Illegal' feinting	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker