



RESPECT THE CALL



THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Referee abuse is an issue on the rise – one that threatens the future of soccer.

90% of referees
report that abuse
has increased over
the last 5 years.

60% of referees
choose not to
recertify due to
harassment and
threats.

Youth soccer needs
referees to grow –
without them,
games can't happen

Source: U.S. Soccer Refereeing Department

A NEW WAY TO SUPPORT REFEREES

U.S. Soccer has updated our Referee Abuse Prevention Policy. Adhering to this updated policy and sharing it with your audience is the new way to support referees.



Stronger sanctions for physical and non-physical referee abuse



Clearer definitions for what constitutes different categories of abuse



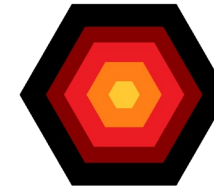
Suspensions can be a **number of games AND/OR time-based** depending on severity and circumstance



Penalty multipliers for repeat infractions or abuse against a minor



Coaches, players, spectators, and referees are all encouraged to **report abuse**



March 2025: Updated policy in effect – please **share to spread awareness**

Information about policy updates and shareable collateral will be sent via email and are available at

[USSOCCER.COM/RAP](https://ussoccer.com/rap)



REFEREE ABUSE PREVENTION

EFFECTIVE MARCH 2025

NON-PHYSICAL ABUSE



LEVEL 1: VERBAL TAUNTING

Words or gestures that are:

- Insulting
- Belittling
- Insinuating
- Taunting
- Undermining Referee Authority



PENALTY:
2-GAME
MINIMUM SUSPENSION

LEVEL 2: HARASSMENT / INTIMIDATION

Language or body language intended to make referee feel unsafe:

- Harassment
- Intimidation
- Retaliation
- Abusive or Threatening (Non-Physical) Language



PENALTY:
4-GAME
MINIMUM SUSPENSION

LEVEL 3: VERBAL TAUNTING

Aggressive language and threats of violence:

- Aggression
- Attacking
- Derogatory
- Cyberbullying
- Doxing
- Threatening
(Physical/Violence) Language

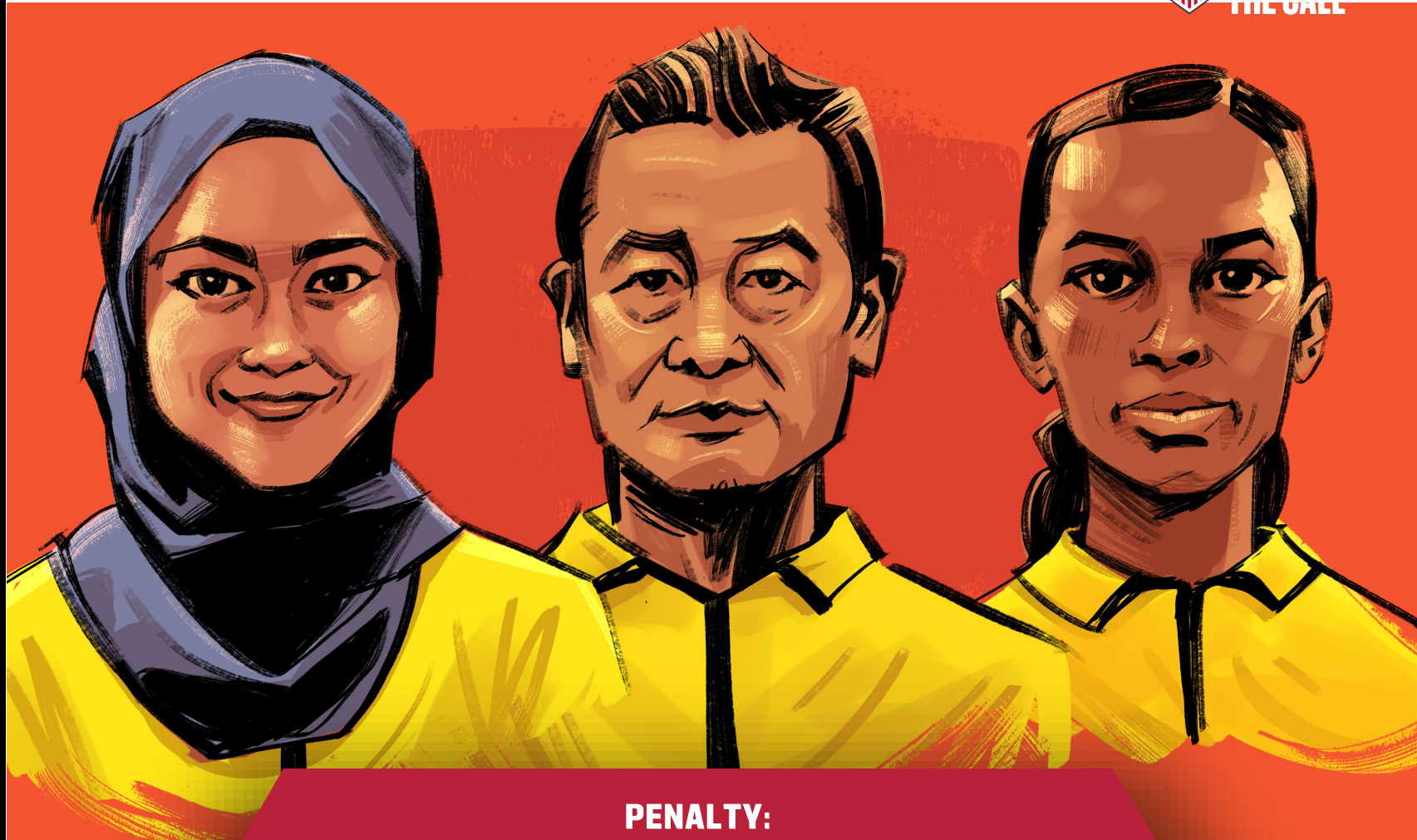


PENALTY:
6-GAME AND OR 6-24 MONTHS
MINIMUM SUSPENSION

LEVEL 4: VERBAL TAUNTING

Discriminatory or derogatory words or actions based on:

- Race
- Skin Color
- Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Social Origin
- Gender
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Language
- Religion



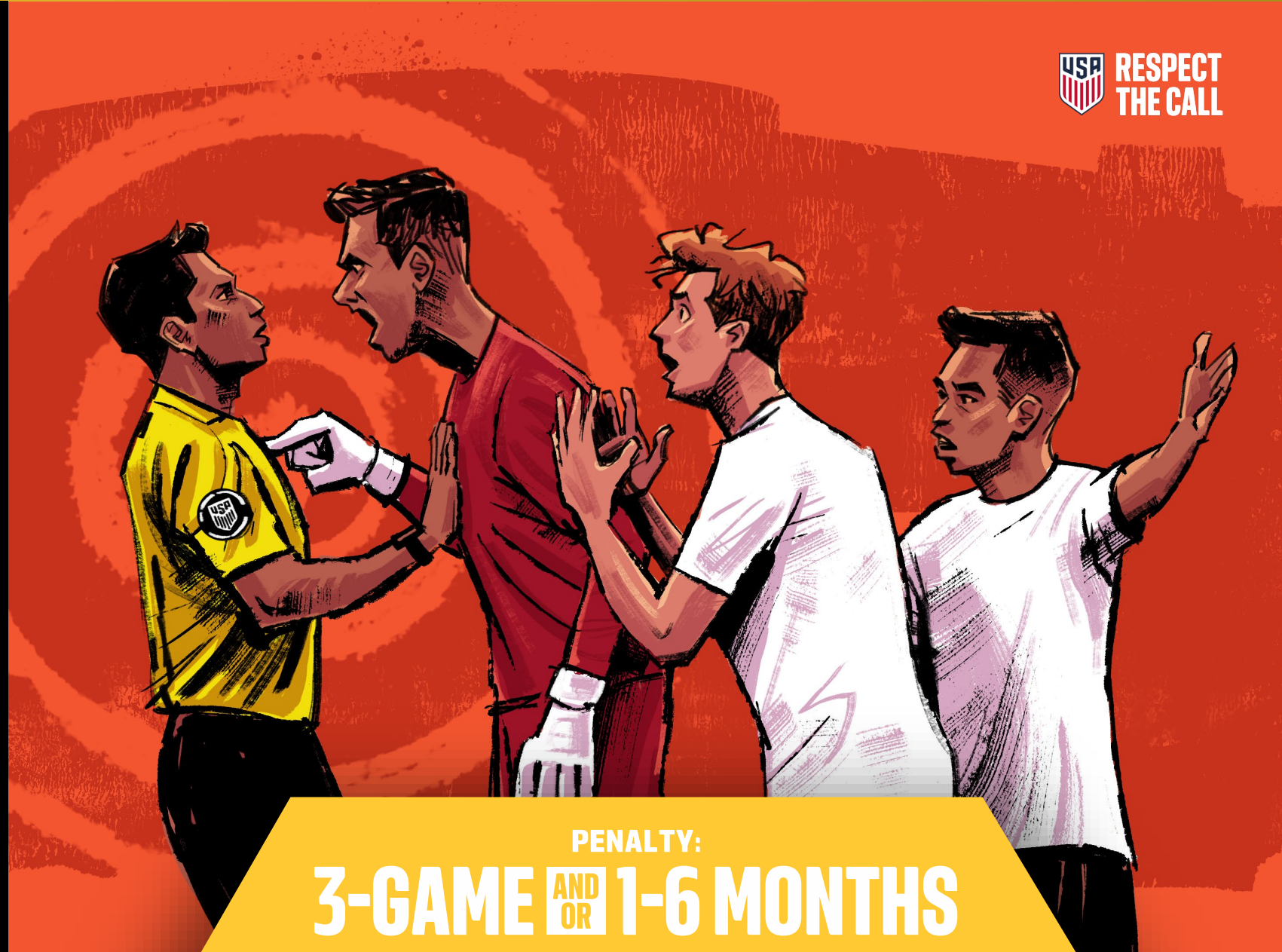
PENALTY:
10-GAME AND OR 12-24 MONTHS
MINIMUM SUSPENSION

PHYSICAL ABUSE



LEVEL 1:
MINOR OR SLIGHT TOUCHING

Minor or Slight Deliberate
Touching



PENALTY:
3-GAME AND OR 1-6 MONTHS
MINIMUM SUSPENSION

LEVEL 2: INTENTIONAL CONFRONTATION

Using contact to intimidate or provoke a physical confrontation:

- Pushing
- Grabbing
- Pulling
- Squeezing
- Pinching
- Lightly Slapping
- Use of Object in Non-Striking Manner
- Physical Property Damage



PENALTY:
10-GAME AND OR 1-6 MONTHS
MINIMUM SUSPENSION

LEVEL 3:

VIOLENT CONTACT

Physical contact that is malicious, violent, or intended to cause harm:

- Hitting
- Punching
- Elbowing
- Kicking
- Biting
- Spitting
- Choking
- Tackling
- Throwing or Use of Object or Body Part in a Striking Manner



PENALTY:
12-GAME UP TO LIFETIME BAN
MINIMUM SUSPENSION

A large orange circle is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

OTHER KEY ASPECTS OF 531-9

**Penalty is 3X when a
minor referee**

**2nd Offense and penalty
is 2X**

**3rd Offense is Lifetime
Ban from US Soccer!**



HOW CAN YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- Respect the referees even when you disagree
- The game needs your help to create a movement
- If you see bad behavior – tell us (NH SRC, NHSL, NHSA)
 - Submit a report of what you see
 - [Referee Abuse Reporting Form](#)
 - Send an email (sra@nhreferee.org)