



2019-20 NJYSA Modifications of the Laws of the Game (LOTG) Changes and Clarifications

(As presented to the NJYS Board of Directors and adoption 8/16/19)

NJYS – Technical Committee Modifications in BLUE. Where the NJYS Modification is listed as “No modification to the OTG”, the LOTG change is anticipated to be adopted in full.

In March of this year, the International Football Association Board approved several changes to the Laws of the Game. The IFAB, the independent and international guardians of the laws of the game made these changes after a two-year study and experimentation to make the laws more practical in some cases and clearer in others. The changes were in effect as of June 1 for international play. As a fan of the sport, you likely saw many of them enforced during the FIFA Women’s World Cup and the CONCACAF Gold Cup this summer. Other associations and leagues can implement them at a natural break. The NJYS Technical Committee Recommended to the NJYS Board of Directors to implement the changes **for the 2019-20 seasonal year, with league matches starting after September 1, 2019.** All league sanctioned by NJYS (Travel and Recreation) are anticipated to fully adopt the changes and NJYS Modifications for the 2019-2020 seasonal year.

Highlights of the changes in the LOTG.

- The introduction of red and yellow cards for misconduct of team officials.
- A player being substituted leaving the field at the nearest point on the boundary line [with NJYS Modification for 7U-19U]
- At a goal kick and a free kick for the defending team in their own penalty area, the ball is in play as soon the kick is taken (it can be played before it leaves the penalty area). [with NJYS Modification for 7v7]
- Other changes include: clearer wording for ‘handball’, attacking team players must be at least 1 yard away from a defensive ‘wall’, the goalkeeper only has to have one foot on the goal line at a penalty kick, and a new dropped ball procedure (including a dropped ball being awarded if the ball hits a match official and goes into the goal, team possession changes or a promising attack starts).
- Questions or recommendations for future modifications, contact Kyle Haddock, NJYS Technical Chair kyle@njyouthsoccer.com

Substitutions Law 3

Changes:

- 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.).
- Players must stand at the halfway line for the referee to give them permission to come on to the field.

Explanation:

- To stop a player who is being substituted ‘wasting’ time by leaving slowly at the halfway line (which is not a Law requirement) the player must leave at the nearest point (as with an injury) unless the referee indicates otherwise, e.g. if the player can leave quickly at the halfway line, there is a safety/security issue or the player leaves on a stretcher. The player must go immediately to the technical area or dressing room to avoid problems with substitutes, spectators, or the match officials. A player who infringes the spirit of this Law should be sanctioned for unsporting behavior i.e. delaying the restart of play.

NJYS Modification

- A player who is being substituted must leave the field by the nearest point on the touchline of their Team’s Technical area (Coaches side) unless the referee indicates the player can leave quickly/immediately at a different point due to safety, injury, etc.). In all cases, the Player’s safety and separation from the opponent and opponent’s fans should be considered when a Referee instructs a player on where to leave the field.

Explanation:

While the new procedures adopted by IFAB assist in eliminating time wasting at the professional level where playing fields are surrounded by barriers and security measures, our concern at the youth level is to avoid any possible conflict between a player leaving the field and spectators that may line the field in areas other than at the team bench area. In the youth soccer environment, generally there are no barriers or security between the playing field and spectators, thus there is an opportunity for interaction between a player leaving the field of play and spectators. This should be avoided by continuing to manage the substitution process at midfield between the team benches or when void of spectators along the touchline of the team's technical area.

Player Equipment Law 4

Changes:

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

Explanation:

- Manufacturers now make patterned undershirts whose sleeves are the same as the main shirt sleeve; these should be allowed as they help match officials' decision-making.

NJYS Modification: No Modification to the LOTG

Team Officials Laws 5 & 12

Changes:

- A team official guilty of misconduct will be shown a Yellow Card (caution) or Red Card (sending-off); if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach who is in the technical area at the time will receive the YC/RC. Law 12 will have a list of YC/RC offences.

Explanation:

- The experiment with YC/RC for misconduct by team officials has been successful and has revealed many benefits at all levels, including for young referees dealing with 'difficult' adult coaches. If the offender cannot be identified, the senior team official (usually the main coach) in the technical area will receive the YC/RC (as the person responsible for the other team officials).

NJYS Modification:

- No modification to the LOTG. Clarification: The "Senior" coach shall be the identified "Head" Coach, or first coach listed on the match report.

Medical Breaks Law 7

Changes:

- Difference between 'cooling' breaks (90 secs — 3 mins) and 'drinks' breaks (max 1 min).

Explanation:

- In the interests of player safety, competition rules may allow, in certain weather conditions (e.g. high humidity and temperatures), 'cooling' breaks (from ninety seconds to three minutes) to allow the body's temperature to fall; they are different from 'drinks' breaks (maximum one minute) which are for rehydration.

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG. Clarification: Referees and Coaches shall include instructions on timing of cooling breaks prior to each half.



Kickoff Law 8

Changes:

- The team that wins the toss can now choose to take the kick-off or which goal to attack (previously they only had the choice of which goal to attack).

Explanation:

- Recent Law changes have made kick-off more dynamic (e.g. a goal can be scored directly from kick-off) so captain winning the toss often ask to take the kick-off.

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG.

Dropped Ball Laws 8 & 9

Changes:

- If play is stopped inside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for the goalkeeper only.
- If play is stopped outside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the point of the last touch.
- In all cases, all the other players (of both teams) must be at least 4m (4.5 Yards) away.
- If the ball touches the referee (or another match official) and goes into the goal, team possession changes or a promising attack starts, a dropped ball is awarded.

Explanation:

- The current dropped ball procedure often leads to a 'manufactured' restart which is 'exploited' unfairly (e.g. kicking the ball out for a throw in deep in the opponents' half) or an aggressive confrontation. Returning the ball to the team that last played it restores what was lost when play stopped, except in the penalty area where it is simpler to return the ball to the goalkeeper. To prevent that team gaining an unfair advantage, all players of both teams, except the players receiving the ball, must be at least 4m (4.5 yards) away.
- It can be very unfair if a team gains an advantage or scores a goal because the ball has hit a match official, especially a referee.

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG.

Goal Celebration Law 12

Changes:

- A Yellow Card for an "illegal" celebration (e.g. removing shirt) remains even if the goal is disallowed.

Explanation:

- Cautions for inappropriate goal celebrations apply even if the goal is disallowed as the impact (safety, image of the game etc.) is the same as of the goal was awarded.

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG.

Quick Free Kick and Yellow/Red Cards Law 12

Changes:

- If the referee is about to issue a YC/RC but the non-offending team takes the free kick quickly and creates a goal-scoring opportunity, the referee can delay the YC/RC until the next stoppage if the offending team was not distracted by the referee.

Explanation:

- Occasionally, an attack is stopped by a cautionable (YC) or sending-off (RC) offense and the attacking team takes a quick free kick which restores the 'lost' attack; it is clearly 'unfair' if this 'new' attack is stopped to issue the YC/RC. However, if the referee has distracted the offending team by starting the YC/RC procedure, the quick free kick is not allowed. For a Denial of Goal Scoring Opportunity (DOGSO) offense, the player will be cautioned (YC) and not sent-off (RC) because the attack was re-started (as when advantage is applied for a DOGSO offense).

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG.

Handball Law 12

Changes:

- The following 'handball' situations, even if accidental, will be a free kick:
 - The ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand/arm.
 - A player gains control/possession of the ball after it has touched their hand/arm and then scores or creates a goal-scoring opportunity.
 - The ball touches a player's hand/arm which has made their body unnaturally bigger.
 - The ball touches a player's hand/arm when it is above their shoulder (unless the player has deliberately played the ball which then touches their hand/arm).
- The following will not usually be a free kick, unless they are one of the above situations:
 - The ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from their own head/body/foot or the head/body/foot of another player who is close/near.
 - The ball touches a player's hand/arm which is close to their body and has not made their body unnaturally bigger.
 - If a player is falling and the ball touches their hand/arm when it is between their body and the ground to support the body (but not extended to make the body bigger).
 - If the goalkeeper attempts to clear a throw-in or a deliberate kick from a team-mate but the clearance fails, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball.

Explanation:

- Soccer does not accept a goal being scored by a hand/arm (even if accidental).
- Soccer expects a player to be penalized for handball if they gain possession/control of the ball from their hand/arm and gain a major advantage.
- It is natural for a player to put their arm between their body and the ground for support when falling.
- Having the hand/arm above shoulder height is rarely a natural position and a player is 'taking a risk' by having the hand/arm in that position, including when sliding.
- If the ball comes off the player's body, or off another player (of either team) who is close by, onto the hands/arm it is often impossible to avoid contact with the ball.
- When the GK clearly kicks or tries to kick the ball into play, this shows no intention to handle the ball, so if the 'clearance' attempt is unsuccessful, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball without committing an offence.

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG.

Free Kick Law 13

Changes:



- When there is a 'wall' of three or more defenders, the attackers are not allowed within 1 meter (1 yard) of the wall; an attacker less than 1 meter (1 yard) from the 'wall' when the kick is taken will be penalized with an indirect free kick.
- When the defending team takes a free kick in their own penalty area, the ball is in play once the kick is taken; it does not have to leave the penalty area before it can be played.
- In an indirect free kick, once the kick has been taken and a goal will not be scored from the kick, there is no more need for a signal.

Explanation:

- The attackers standing very close to, or in, the defensive 'wall' at a free kick often create management problems and waste time. There is no legitimate tactical justification for attackers to be in the 'wall' and their presence is against the 'spirit of the game' and often damages the image of the game.
- The ball not having to leave the penalty area has produced faster and more constructive restarts. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area and at least 9.15 meters away until the ball is in play. The same change has been made to the goal kick.

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG.

Penalty Kicks Law 14

Changes:

- The team's penalty taker can have (quick) treatment/assessment and then take the kick.
- The goalkeeper must not be touching the goalposts/crossbar/nets; they must not be moving.
- The goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot on/in line with the goal line when the kick is taken; cannot stand behind the line.

Explanation:

- It is unfair if the kicker needs assessment/treatment and then must leave the field and cannot take the penalty kick.
- 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 e.g. the goalkeeper has kicked/shaken them.
- Goalkeepers are not permitted to stand in front of or behind the line. Allowing the goalkeeper to have only one foot touching the goal line (or, if jumping, in line with the goal line) when the penalty kick is taken is a more practical approach as it is easier to identify if both feet are not on the line. As the kicker can 'stutter' in the run, it is reasonable that the goalkeeper can take one step in anticipation of the kick.
- Goal Celebrations.

NJYS Modification: No modification to the LOTG.

Goal Kick Law 16

Changes:

- The ball is in play once the kick is taken; it can be played before leaving the penalty area.

Explanation:

- The experiment that at a goal kick the ball is in play once it is kick, and does not have to leave the penalty area, has created a faster and more dynamic/constructive restart to the game. It has reduced the time 'lost/wasted/ including stopping the tactic of 'wasting' time when a defender deliberately plays the ball before it leaved the penalty area knowing that all that will happen is the goal kick will be retaken. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.

NJYS Modification:

- 7v7: The ball is in play when "it is kicked and clearly moves". Teammates of the kicker may reside in or enter the penalty area and play/touch the ball. Opponents shall to remain outside of the build-out line and may move across the line after the ball is in play. If a team chooses to take a goal kick or a free kick quickly, they are doing so at their own risk.
- 7v7 Guidance: First implemented for the Fall 2019 season, Coaches and Referees should encourage all players to retreat past the build-out line before play is restarted. In the spirit of Grassroots soccer and player development and during the first weeks of year 1 at the 7v7 level, coaches should encourage their players to allow the opponent a 2nd touch before crossing the build-out line when the ball is played to a teammate in the penalty area as the competition level warrants.



US Soccer Slide received 8/16/19 (reference only)

Goal Kick and PDIs (7v7 Small-Sided)



- The ball is play when “it is kicked and clearly moves”
- Teammates of the kicker may reside in or enter the penalty area and play/touch the ball
- Opponents in the Build Out Line may move across the line after the ball is in play
- The kicker may choose to take the goal kick quick at her/his own team’s risk