Offensive Language Violations

Purpose: To share how the VMSL disciplinary governance will be applied for Offensive Language Violations. Specific examples of offensive language and the number of suspended games are shown in the next slide. The VMSL is looking to show some leniency in certain situations (e.g. first time offenders), however, we still reserve the right to apply the BC Soccer recommended suspensions as described in Sections 13, 24 and 29 (see additional slides). Note that team officials also hold a measure of responsibility for their players' behavior and could be subject to discipline.

Note: The coaches, management and players in the league need to understand that the recommended discipline as described in the slides are not written in stone. In other words, the referee may, at their discretion, decide on offenses based on temperature of the match, applying an advantage to not negatively impact the game flow, or in the interest of game safety.

VMSL Examples of Offensive Language incidents and the recommended discipline

Offensive Language Incident	Description	Recommended Matches Suspended
Insulting, belittling	Insulting, belittling, insinuating, or taunting behaviour undermining the Referee's Authority - examples "Do you even know the rules?", "Did you forget your glasses?", "You suck!", "What's the other team paying you?", "you're the worst Referee we have ever had!"	2 matches minimum
Harrassment, intimidation	Harassment, intimidation, retaliation, abusive, or threatening (non-physical) language - examples "That call was bullshit!", "You're a fucking joke!", "You can't make a single good fucking call!", "Fuck you Ref", Getting in the Referee's face, swearing in a different language.	4 matches minimum
Aggression, attacking	Aggression, attacking, derogatory, cyber bullying doxing, or threatening (physical/violence) language - examples "I'll kick your ass", "Watch your back", making a social media post attacking the Referee	6 matches or 6 to 24 months minimum
Loud swearing in public or towards another player	Swearing in a loud and provacative manner - where children and families can hear	1 to 3 matches
Discriminatory act	Offensive or discriminatory act - examples - racial or ethnic slurs, offensive gestures, homophobic language, harmful or sexist stereotypes	10 matches or 12 to 24 months
Physical Offences at a Match Official	**Description**	**Recommended Matches Suspended**
Minor or slight touching	examples - tapping the Referee's shoulder to get their attention, touching the Referee's chest with your finger, grabbing the Referee's jersey to get their attention, intentionally bumping lightly into the Referee	3 matches or 1 to 6 months
Intentional Confrontation	examples - shoving the Referee, forcefully grabbing the Referee's arm, throwing a water bottle at the ground in front of the Referee, aggressively grabbing the Referee's jersey, following the Referee to their car - 10 games and/or 6-24 months minimum	10 matches or 6 to 24 months
Violent Contact	examples - kicking, punching, or choking the Referee, throwing a water bottle with the intent of hitting the Referee, intentionally kicking the ball at the Referee	12 months or a lifetime ban

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Official BC Soccer Policies Re: Offensive Language

13. Public Criticism / Statements (including by means of communications or social media)

- Failure to refrain from public criticism of players, fellow officials, Team Personnel or Soccer Organization, and/or abusive, insulting or offensive language and/or behaviour
- Made derogatory statements to the media relating to any match in which he/she was involved concerning the performance of the players or Match Officials.

ROLE	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine / Bond	1st Offence	2nd Offence	3rd Offence	Egregious
Player	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	Reprimand and up to 6 months	3 to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
Team Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	Reprimand and up to 6 months	3 to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
Association Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	Reprimand and up to 6 months	3 to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
Match Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	Reprimand and up to 6 months	3 to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
Team	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	Reprimand and up to 6 months	3 to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
Spectator	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	Reprimand and up to 6 months	3 to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
ADDITIVE If the offence above is Against a Youth by an Adult, and/or Racist or Sexist Comments, then the minimum/maximum sanction in the corresponding ADDITIVE table must be added to the original offence.						
Against a Youth by an Adult	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $500 and/or Bond up to $2000	1 to 6 months	3 to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
Racist or Sexist Comments	Administrative (applies to entire suspension, regardless of role)	Up to additional Fine and/or Bond $10,000	6 to 12 months	12 to 24 months	36 to 60 months	Up to lifetime

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24. *Language and/or Profanity – Directed*

- *Insulting language or gestures directed at another individual that is loud enough to be heard and/or seen by another Player, Team official, Association Official, Match Official and/or Spectator, etc.*

ROLE	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine / Bond	1st Offence	2nd Offence	3rd Offence	Egregious
Player	Touchline / Field	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	2 to 4 matches	4 to 8 matches	Up to Balance of season or 6 months	6 to 12 months
Team Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	4 matches	6 to 12 matches	Up to Balance of season or 6 months	6 to 12 months
Association Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	2 to 6 months	4 to 8 months	Up to Balance of season or 6 months	12 to 24 months
Match Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	1 to 6 months	3 to 8 months	Up to Balance of season or 12 months	12 to 24 months
Team	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	1 to 2 months	Up to 12 months	12 to 60 months	Up to lifetime
Spectator	Touchline / Field	Fine $250 and/or Bond up to $1000	2 to 4 weeks	4 to 8 weeks	Up to Balance of season or 6 months	6 to 12 months
ADDITIVE						
Against a Match Official	Administrative (applies to entire suspension, regardless of role)	Up to additional Fine and/or Bond $1000	4 weeks	4 to 8 weeks	Additional 6 months	Additional 12 months
Against a Youth by an Adult	Administrative (applies to entire suspension, regardless of role)	Up to additional Fine and/or Bond $2000	8 weeks	8 to 16 weeks	Additional 12	Up to lifetime
Racist or Sexist Comments	Administrative (applies to entire suspension, regardless of role)	Up to additional Fine and/or Bond $10,000	3 to 6 months	4 to 8 months	Additional 12 months	Up to lifetime

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29. Failure to Control

- Failing to control players or Spectators after request by the referee
- Failure to address harassment by team or Spectators
- Failure to address foul, abusive, insulting or offensive language and/or behaviour by players or Spectators
- Failure to identify a Spectator or other individual responsible for misconduct towards a Match Official

ROLE	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine / Bond	1st Offence	2nd Offence	3rd Offence	Egregious
Team Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $300 And/or Bond up to $1000	2 to 8 weeks	4 to 12 weeks	3 to12 months	6 to 24 months
Association Official	Touchline / Field / Administrative	Fine $300 And/or Bond up to $1000	4 to 8 weeks	8 to 12 weeks	6 to12 months	6 to 24 months

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