



NCJLA Sideline Manager Training and Protocols

Thank you for taking on this vital role. We realize that this job may impact your ability to see your child play today and that you may be required to deal with a difficult individual. Please remember that this task is about preserving the culture of our sport and providing a SAFE environment for our athletes to play and grow. We hope that you have had a chance to review the Positive Coaching Alliance core principles, the NCJLA video and the USL ROOTS sportsmanship card. This short job description and protocols will provide you with the essential instructions and intervention strategies to perform your volunteer service for your child's team.

Sideline Manager Job Description

Your role is to observe and help maintain a positive and sportsmanlike environment at the sports venue on the opposite sidelines or in the stands. The game officials will handle the table, bench area, and any on-the-field sportsmanship issues. In the event a spectator needs an official warning or removal from the venue the officials will also handle that process, but they will need timely and accurate information from you before doing so.

Instructions & Protocols for Sideline Managers, Score Table Personnel, Officials & Coaches

1. The host team (team whose club rented or owns the venue) will have a laminated USL ROOTS Sportsmanship card at the score table along with the NCJLA Rules and Protocol sheets. *It is highly recommended that your club send you with an NCJLA sideline manager vest and sportsmanship card to avoid delays in starting the game.*
2. Before the official's coin toss, introduce yourself to the score table and the opposing team's Sideline Manager so they know you can approach the table if need be during the game. Make sure you have your NCJLA Sideline Manager vest and the ROOTS Sportsmanship card.
3. Discuss with the other sideline manager how you will complete the following:
 - a. Monitoring of the spectator area: shared, divided, only your team, etc.
 - b. Diffuse arguments: the other sideline manager can step in if the behavior is not changing or you feel uncomfortable.
 - c. Report escalating behavior: one sideline manager observes and reports while the other walks to the score table to inform the officials, or use of cell phone video
4. Attend the pre-game coaches and officials meeting. The NCJLA requires that both team's sideline managers attend the pre-game meeting for it to be a legal game. The team that does not have a sideline manager must forfeit the game.
 - a. The officials will review rules and behavior expectations.
 - b. The officials will give instructions on how they want you to report unsportsmanlike or exceptionally positive sportsmanlike behavior.
 - c. Only the game officials can issue an ejection, penalty or end a game for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Instructions for Sideline Managers During the Game

During a game, pay attention to any behaviors that are detrimental to the spirit of the game or violate one of the pillars of the ROOTS card. In some instances, you can issue a verbal warning and in others it will require immediate action and a follow up report.

Sideline Manager Protocols:

1. Observe and monitor
2. Consult with the other Sideline Manager and decide on an action plan
3. Begin with the 5 Step Intervention Strategies (*details below*)
 - a. Give a verbal warning
 - b. Hand the spectator with unsportsmanlike behavior the Roots Blue Card
 - c. Inform the score table of the situation and have them stop the game clock and inform the officials/coaches
 - d. Follow the instructions of the Officials who enforce the NFHS/USL rules
4. Record the behavior and any actions taken via the **NCJLA Sportsmanship Incidence Reporting Form**. Send a copy of your report to your club president.

Behaviors to Monitor and Report

Fan and spectator behaviors that are detrimental to the game include (but are not limited to):

- Entering the playing area to argue, berate or threaten game participants
- Throwing objects onto the field or in the stands
- Repeated verbal abuse of the officials or players
- Verbal threats of bodily harm, wishing injuries on another person, or death
- The use of any obscene or offensive language which violates the NCJLA offensive language policy (*includes gestures*).
- Fighting- in any form, among any participants.
- Other unsportsmanlike acts that are not covered above.



NCJLA Intervention Strategies and Tactics

Not all volunteers are equipped to address unsportsmanlike behavior or language. It is imperative that clubs provide training and that the NCJLA supports the sideline managers who report incidences. Below are the 5 steps for addressing unsportsmanlike conduct.

Step 1: The Verbal Suggestion

Approach the offending party in a nonthreatening manner. Make casual eye contact and adopt a friendly tone to your voice. If the misbehaving party is irate, deflect their emotions away from the target of their displeasure by recognizing their anger and reminding them that the culture of our program is based upon respecting the participants, even if we disagree with their actions. Below are some examples of how to give a verbal suggestion:

DEFLECT THE BEHAVIOR PHRASES	FOLLOWED SOFTY WITH	THEN DEFINE THE CONSEQUENCE	NAME THE DESIRED OUTCOME
You seem to disagree with...	However	This game will end	Please rethink your actions
I appreciate your anger with...	but	We can't conduct ourselves contrary to the Code of Conduct	Work with us to create a positive exp. for the kids
I understand your reaction to...	Providing you realize	The athletes will suffer	Please refrain from making the coach's job more difficult
I hear what you say about...	nevertheless	That behavior is inappropriate	Honor the game by cheering for the kids

If you must come back to admonish this person a second time, you are probably going to have to report this person to the score table, coaches and officials (and you may need to do so on the first occurrence of the behavior, if the misconduct warrants). If both Sideline Manager's (home & visitor) attempts to diffuse the situation doesn't work, then they must proceed directly to Step 2.

Step 2: Issue the Blue Card

You may become involved in an aggravated situation where the card must be issued with or without prior verbal warning. Merely hand the individual the card or have the crowd pass it to them. Nothing needs to be said. Do not attempt to stop the guilty party(s) or wait for a response. Simply walk away. Do not place yourself or the other Sideline Manager in harm's way or allow yourself to become the target of additional verbal abuse. Bad form from the Sideline Managers is inexcusable as well. For the Blue Card to work, the sideline manager behavior must be beyond reproach. It should take the individual(s) a few seconds to read the card, and by then the issuing sideline manager should have departed the area for the score table. The other sideline manager should be a safe distance away and observing the spectators.

HONOR THE GAME OF LACROSSE!

Respect the ROOTS of Positive Play

Rules: We refuse to bend the rules to win

Opponents: A worthy opponent is a gift that brings out our best

Officials: Show respect even when we disagree

Teammates: Never do anything to embarrass our team

Self: We live up to our own standards even when others don't

"Honor the Game."

Please rethink your actions.

Your current behavior is contrary to the high level of sportsmanship expected at lacrosse events.

THIS EVENT MAY BE TERMINATED IF YOUR CONDUCT DOES NOT IMPROVE.



Step 3: Inform the Coaches and Officials

Go immediately to the score table and inform them that a Blue Card has been issued. Have the timer alert the officials at the next available opportunity. Identify the offending party to the officials and coaches. If the situation warrants the officials will allow the corresponding coach to address behavior or inform the spectator(s) they must leave before the game can proceed. The officials will enforce the sportsmanship rules in the NFHS and USL rule books.

Step 4: Inform the NCJLA

Secondary to encouraging positive sportsmanship the Sideline Manager is to observe and report on behavior within the league. If a Sideline Manager must issue a blue card, they should file an NCJLA Sportsmanship Incident Report Form (SIR) and forward the confirmation to their club president. The NCJLA will review the SIR and follow up with the parties involved per the Operations Guide Policy. The names of the reporting party are never shared with the parties involved. The NCJLA would also like to hear about Positive Sportsmanship Incidences. Sideline Managers play a vital role in reporting the positive culture that our players and families have grown to love and expect.

Step 5: Return to Your Own Sideline

If you need help, get back up from your supportive parents and the other team's sideline manager. The community will endorse your actions and rally support.

More Information and Contacts

Again, thank you for helping to maintain the culture of Lacrosse by "Honoring the Game". The NCJLA has a public policy regarding unsportsmanlike conduct and how the league will address those instances. A list of consequences and expectations can be found in the NCJLA Operations Guide. (Code of Conduct and Sportsmanship Incidence Reporting). Sideline managers should feel confident that the league will support their vital role in promoting positive sideline culture. The NCJLA recommends that the club seek out volunteers who may already have the skills or personality traits that allow them to feel confident in this volunteer role. Careers that lend well to this role: criminal justice, security, military, medical, human resources, education etc. Should your club or volunteers have any questions please have them email an NCJLA staff member under the NCJLA Board Members and Staff Contacts tab.

NCJLA Sideline Manager Training Video ([Click here to view](#))