

If a Match Official witnesses an offence

If a Match Official hears any offensive or abusive comments which include any reference to race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or disability they must:

- Dismiss the offending player or technical area occupant from the field in accordance with Law 12.
- Make full notes of the exact words used as soon as possible. This includes the next stoppage in play.
- Complete full notes of the incident immediately after the match (i.e. prior to leaving the changing room).
- The notes should be retained by all the Match Officials.
- As well as submitting an Extraordinary Incident match report, the Referee should immediately inform their referee appointments officer.

If a Match Official is made aware of an alleged offence

If a Match Official is made aware of allegations or hears comments from participants or non-participants relating to comments involving race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or disability they must:

- Make full notes of any discussions as soon as possible. This includes the next stoppage in play. The Football Association encourages players to report any such incidents to the Match Officials as soon as possible. Match Officials may become aware of incidents which they themselves have not witnessed during the course of a game. If this occurs the Referee should ensure that full notes of the incident are made at the time. Again, this may involve discussions with other members of the refereeing team.
- *Shortly after the conclusion of the game the referee should then (subject to the note below) invite the person who made the allegation, accompanied by a member of their club, into the referee's changing room. The referee should confirm with the player the exact words used in the allegation so that there is certainty on exactly what is being reported. The referee should ensure that there is an appropriate environment in the changing room for a discussion of this importance.*
- *Following this meeting the referee should then invite the person who is the subject of the allegation, again accompanied by a member of their club, into the changing room. The referee should advise this player of the nature of the allegation. If the player makes any comments these should be recorded. Again, the referee should ensure that there is an appropriate environment in the changing room.*

If an incident occurs and the match officials do not feel suitable security infrastructure is in place we would not expect the referee to put themselves in a position which may impact on their safety. Therefore the sections in red, although ideal, may not be appropriate or advised.

Fundamentally it is important that (a) the referee does not defer responsibility for taking notes regarding the incident until the end of the game; it must be recorded then and (b) you submit an Extraordinary Incident report following the game, irrespective of whether the discriminatory language/behaviour was heard by the referee or reported to the referee.

It is also important that when a Match Official has been made aware of an allegation of discriminatory behaviour that they have not heard themselves, they should also observe and include in their report the behaviours of all involved.

If a Match Official is advised of an allegation after the match

Where a Match Official is advised of an allegation after the match they should ensure that full notes of the allegation are made prior to leaving the changing room.

- The notes should include timings and as be as accurate as possible including reported speech
- The notes should document all participants in attendance at the meeting or meetings
- The notes should be retained by the Match Officials
- As well as submitting an extraordinary match report the Referee should immediately inform their referee appointments officer
- Match officials are strongly advised not to make any comments to the media regarding any aspect of an allegation of this nature.

Post-Match Reporting

It is incumbent upon the match referee to report any discriminatory behaviour as part of their misconduct reporting process following the game.

Any offence which has been heard, seen or any allegation made (irrespective of its origins) must be reported as an Extraordinary Incident following the game.