



BRITISH AMERICAN FOOTBALL REFEREES ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Guidance for Working with Mixed Gender Crews **An Amendment to the BAFRA Equality and Diversity Policy**

BAFRA aims to grow and diversify its membership, and therefore this guidance is written to reduce any difference in gameday experience for all genders who are active and perform a role within officiating American Football in Britain. Ensuring equal opportunities within BAFRA for all members, regardless of gender, is the responsibility of all members and crews.

Changing Facilities

When liaising with gameday management in the lead up to a game, Referees should request that there be separate changing facilities for female officials (non-binary or gender fluid officials may also have separate facilities if they prefer; they should communicate this to the Referee) that are not shared with players or open to the public.

At venues where changing rooms are limited and separate changing is not possible, this should be communicated in advance and give the affected officials the option to arrive dressed or partially dressed in their gameday uniform, ready for the field. Alternatively, the crew should take it in turns to change promptly, prioritising changing into on-field trousers and stripes and affixing accessories later.

If no separate changing room can be provided, or the separate facility provided is inadequate, this must be reported on the game management report.

Pre-Game and Post-Game Conferences

When mixed gender crews are changing separately, officials should refrain from beginning pre-games without all of the crew present. As above, crews should prioritise changing into stripes and trousers promptly so that the crew can be reunited to begin pre-game discussions. Alternatively, crews could complete their pre-game discussions first, before splitting to change. Crews should not begin changing during the pre-game discussion on mixed gender crews.

Similarly, all members should wait for the conclusion of the post-game conference, where the whole crew should be present before beginning to undress.

Addressing Female Officials

All officials should be addressed with terms that respect the position or role that they are undertaking. At the discretion of the official, appropriate titles may include Sir, Ma'am, Ref, or Coach.

Female officials are sometimes subject to outdated and disrespectful addresses, such as

'sweetheart', 'darling', or similar. Players and coaches should be left in no doubt that this will not be tolerated, either through an initial firm warning or penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct, dependent on the situation.

Similarly, overtly flirtatious or inappropriate language, including but not limited to commenting on appearance, will not be tolerated.

As a rule, consider whether the word(s) or action(s) are appropriate for the workplace. If the answer is no, then it's inappropriate for the field, too.

It is a crew's responsibility to recognise, penalise & report sexism when it occurs on the field. Other BAFRA members should also be mindful of how they address female officials on their crew, although we recognise that personal friendships occur between officials outside of gameday and this can alter what is considered appropriate.

Regardless of gender, officials should also be aware of the personal physical boundaries of others on the crew and respect them.

Support

If you wish to report a situation which you have felt unsafe or disrespected, please contact

safeguarding@bafra.info