



To: National Referees  
National Instructors  
National Assessors  
State Referee Administrators  
State Directors of Instruction  
State Directors of Assessment  
State Directors of Coaching

From: U.S. Soccer Referee Education Resource Center

Subject: **Fourth Officials, Standing or Sitting?**

Date: January 6, 2012

The fourth official has a number of duties assigned by the Laws of the Game and by tradition. Most of these duties require the fourth official to maintain a clear view

- of the field,
- the referee,
- both assistant referees,
- the benches,
- team officials, and
- various other persons allowed in the area of the field who are associated with facility management, security, and communications.

With so much to watch, it is not surprising that USSF guidelines specify that fourth officials are to remain standing at all times -- both to maintain good lines of sight and to be prepared to act quickly should the need arise to intervene in matters for which they are responsible.

Certain questions have been raised regarding whether the fourth official may sit while performing the above duties. The purpose of this memorandum is to confirm the existing policy. A fourth official may not be seated at any time during a match unless this is clearly required by a competition authority's written rule or clearly mandated by a competition authority's director of officials. The availability of a chair does not establish such an exception.