

DUGOUT RESTRICTION POLICY

In an ongoing effort to improve relationships between umpires and coaches, while also maintaining an understanding that arguing judgment calls by umpires which are not balls and strikes has been a longstanding tradition and acceptable policy since the game's inception in the mid 1800's, it is imperative that an additional step be added between an umpire warning and ejecting a manager and/or coach. It is the absolute desire to keep all individuals in the game at all times, whether participating as a player, assistant coach, or manager/head coach. The dugout restriction is an added step to enable that continued participation to occur. Based upon previous usage of this policy in other venues, a drastic decrease of ejections resulted, allowing coaches the opportunity to remain in the dugout and coach their team.

As an umpire at any level, it is of the utmost importance to attempt to diffuse a situation whenever possible, except in cases where an automatic ejection is necessary to keep order and control of the game. These types of situations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical contact by a coach or player (intentional or unintentional)
- Spitting or spraying with saliva
- Kicking dirt
- Personal insults (Anything derogatory preceded by the personal pronoun YOU) "You suck", "You're terrible", etc.
- Verbal threats by coaches alluding to the fact their pitcher may hit them with a pitch, or that their catcher may miss the next pitch, etc.

In the above instances the offender will be automatically ejected without warning

In all other types of arguments the umpire will adhere to the following steps during the course of an argument or arguments:

1. Warn the offender. (Two Warnings to be issued)
2. Warn by stating that continued arguing will result in a dugout restriction. (Intermediate step to restriction)
3. Restrict the offender to the dugout, and ask if they understand what the dugout restriction entails. If they do not, explain in detail.
4. Eject the offender.

Although Managers/Head Coaches are the only individuals allowed to argue by rule, the aforementioned process will apply to any coach, with Managers/Head Coaches given much more latitude than assistants.

Once the individual has been restricted to the dugout, he may not leave the dugout for any reason, except in the case of injury to a player. The restricted individual may not:

- Coach first or third base
- Visit the mound to speak with or remove a pitcher or any player
- Stand in front of the dugout during live play (Where allowed by rule)
- Attempt to speak to an umpire regarding the current or any future situation that does not involve player injury
- Make any negative comment, perceived or direct, to any umpire or member of the opposing team

If the restricted individual violates any of the above stipulations, he or she will be immediately ejected. That coach must leave the area. He shall not remain at field level for the duration of the game.

The rationale is that once an individual has been afforded multiple opportunities to remain in the game and is then ultimately restricted to the dugout for continuing to argue with an umpire, it is a privilege to be able to remain with and coach their team, when previous to this policy they would have simply been ejected and forced to leave the premises. Therefore once the restriction takes place, that individual must adhere to the stipulations set forth or face immediate ejection.

This policy will simply add another step during highly emotional situations which occur frequently throughout the game, that will enable individuals an opportunity to gather themselves and their emotions before necessitating an ejection. Therefore it is believed that this policy will continue to improve relations between coaches and umpires, which will allow for the focus to be ultimately on the players, and their continued development and achievement playing the game of baseball.