

# ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

## USTA NORCAL SPORTSMANSHIP INITIATIVE



USTA NorCal has implemented the **Zero Tolerance Policy** for unsportsmanlike conduct by players and spectators to promote a more enjoyable and fair experience for all. This policy will be diligently and strictly enforced.

### PLAYERS

Players must adhere to the USTA Player Oath that reads:

*I recognize that tennis is a sport that places the responsibility for fair play on me. I promise to abide by the rules of the game, which require me to give the benefit of the doubt to my opponent. At all times I shall strive to compete with the true spirit of sportsmanship, recognizing that my behavior on the court is a direct reflection of my character. Whether my matches end with my victory or defeat, I promise to conduct myself in a way that honors my opponents, those who support me, and the game of tennis.*

Misconduct by players is governed by the **Point Penalty System** that assesses point, game and default penalties for misconduct. This ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY is official notice of a warning that is typically given before penalties are assessed. Players will no longer be given warnings, but will be assessed penalties under the Point Penalty System on the first occurrence of misconduct.

In junior tournaments, misconduct results in the assessment of suspension points under the **USTA Junior Suspension Point System**. This includes the assessment of suspension points for conduct on and off of the court and conduct by persons associated with the player such as family members, friends, and coaches.

Misconduct also includes withdrawals from a tournament for reasons other than illness, injury or personal circumstance that are not excused. Regardless of whether a withdrawal is excused, the timing of a withdrawal can have a significant negative impact on the players and tournament administration. Part of a player's oath to conduct themselves in a way that honors their opponents and the game of tennis is to abide by the concurrent tournament rule, only withdraw when it is absolutely necessary, and to give immediate notice of a withdrawal to the Tournament Director and Referee.

### SPECTATORS

Spectators include parents, other family members, coaches and friends of players, and other tournament guests.

Spectators must adhere to the principles of good sportsmanship and fair play that include:

- SETTING A POSITIVE EXAMPLE FOR PLAYERS.
- TREATING FELLOW SPECTATORS, OFFICIALS, PLAYERS AND TOURNAMENT STAFF WITH RESPECT.
- EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF FAIR PLAY AND GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP TO THE PLAYERS WITH WHOM THEY ASSOCIATED.
- CHEERING RESPECTFULLY FOR WINNERS AND GOOD POINTS, NOT ERRORS AND DOUBLES FAULTS.
- ALLOWING PLAYERS TO WORK OUT ON-COURT DISPUTES.

**Unsportsmanlike behavior by a spectator is prohibited.**

This includes any attempt by a spectator to challenge an official's judgment regarding a line call or other ruling during a match.

In addition to penalties that may be assessed to the player under the Point Penalty System, unsportsmanlike behavior by a spectator may result in immediate removal of that spectator from the playing area and, if warranted, from the premises. Removal is not subject to appeal. Failure to comply with a removal request will result in penalties being assessed under the Point Penalty System on the player with whom the spectator is associated.

The Referee (or in the absence of the Referee, the Deputy Referee) is vested with the authority to:

- Determine unsportsmanlike spectator behavior; **and**
- Impose spectator removal, except that a facility always has the authority to remove a person from the premises.

Unsportsmanlike interaction may also result in suspension of the spectator's right to attend or play in USTA NorCal tournaments for a period to be determined by the USTA NorCal Sportsmanship Committee.