

Delay sanction rules, like improper requests, cause problems for all of us. We've had a number of situations come up this season because these rules were misapplied, and in at least one situation, a protest resulted. Study Rules 16.1 and 16.2 regarding delay sanctions. Make it a personal goal to master the improper request & delay sanction rules by the time we start next season -- and we have six weeks left to practice!

Some hints/tips for delay sanctions:

#1 - An improper request that is WHISTLED becomes a delay.

#2 - You can NEVER skip the delay warning (yellow card on wrist) and go directly to a delay penalty (red card on wrist). This is different than conduct sanctions.

#3 - A second IR in a match MUST be sanctioned as a delay. If the team has already had a delay warning, the second IR is sanctioned with a delay PENALTY.

#4 - A team can be assessed only ONE delay warning per match. After the delay warning has been assessed, any subsequent delays in that match must result in a delay penalty (point/serve to the opponent.)

#5 - It is NOT necessary that a team has received an IR before you assess a delay sanction. They are two separate rules. The only connection between the two is that: 1) a second IR in the match becomes a delay sanction, and 2) an improper request that is whistled becomes a delay sanction.

#6 - An improper request can be assessed AFTER a team has already received a delay warning or penalty. Basically, a team gets ONE improper request per match, regardless of how many delay sanctions have been assessed.

#7 - For a delay sanction related to a substitution, the substitution is DENIED. EX: A substitute enters the sub zone and the substitution request is whistled. It is discovered that the sub is wearing jewelry. The substitution is denied and the sub must return to the bench to remove the jewelry before entering the set.

#8 - When a Libero replacement occurs late (i.e., after the R1 has whistled for serve but before the ball is contact for serve), the team receives a verbal warning at the end of that rally. Subsequent late replacements are sanctioned with a delay warning. Unlike a substitution, the Libero replacement IS ALLOWED after a delay sanction! This is because we can't force a Libero to play in a wrong position (i.e., a front-row spot), so we have to let her leave the court.

#9 - When the assistant scorer notices an improper Libero replacement (involving the wrong player, for example) before the serve, we should fix the replacement and assess a delay.

#10 - Regarding substitutions, we can NEVER "force" a team to make a substitution, even if we have recognized a substitution request with a whistle. If the substitution is illegal, or if the team decides they don't want the sub after we have whistled to recognize it, they can

ALWAYS withdraw the request and accept a delay sanction instead. (Let them know their options! They may prefer to make the sub if they've already had a delay warning earlier in the match.)

There are lots of intricacies with delay sanctions, and preventive officiating is a good way to avoid the need for them. BUT, we probably under-use delay sanctions because we don't understand them. Ask our veteran referees to help you understand them!

Let me know if you have questions about delays. I know they're confusing.

Thanks for studying these rules!

Brian  
OVR Referees' Chair