Good luck to everyone in the 2015-16 season. Below is the first topic in our Referee Operations memo series. We will continue to send these memos every two weeks to help ensure that teams are up-to-date on instructions we gave referees concerning the rules and their enforcement.

We thought it best to lead off with our Respect for the Game guidelines to further reinforce the preseason video I sent on October 4th because of their importance and the potential for misunderstanding. If you have any questions or suggestions for future topics, please reach out to me (mbantom@nba.com), Steven Angel (sangel@nba.com), Bob Delaney (bdelaney@nba.com) or Donnie Vaden (dvaden@nba.com).

Respect for the Game ("RFTG")

Thank you again for your continued efforts to uphold the Respect for the Game standards. These guidelines were implemented to reduce negative reactions to calls, which take the focus off the game itself. Thanks to all of our efforts, we see fewer instances of obvious RFTG violations, such as lengthy complaining, air punches, aggressive wave-offs, direct hand claps, and profanity directed at a game official, as well as a reduction in more subtle actions, which are generally acceptable provided they are not done repeatedly or after a referee warning.

As a reminder, players are permitted to:

- Express disagreement with a call, so long as their reaction is not aggressive, overly demonstrative and dissolves quickly, and
- Approach a referee to ask a question, so long as it's done in a civil manner, and ended when the official has provided an answer.

We had fewer situations last season, but please remind players that while looking at and/or pointing to the jumbotron replay is not an automatic violation, if the act goes on too long, is overly demonstrative or appears to be done to mock a call or non-call, referees will assess a technical foul.

Here are several examples of legal acts that would not result in a technical foul.

http://dmmx2.nba.com/videourlredirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Legal_05
However, these types of acts are deemed impermissible:

- Air punches, wave offs, aggressive or excessive motioning of the arms
- Aggressive hand claps directed at an official or showing resentment for a call or non-call
- Running towards or aggressively approaching a referee
- Shouting a reaction to a call or using profanity
- Extended or prolonged complaining about a call, particularly after being told to stop
- Frantically running away from play after a call or no-call that is not agreed with

Here are two examples of illegal acts that would result in a technical foul.

Use of Warnings:

Lastly, recall that referees have been instructed to issue a warning to players, if possible, in situations like these:

- Continuing to discuss a call after the referee has responded,
- Holding his arms in the air following a call for a prolonged period of time,
- Attempting to demonstrate actions such as traveling, goaltending, etc., or
- Repeatedly asking questions, making comments, or gesturing throughout a period of time

In cases like these, the referee will attempt to issue a warning to the player although they are not required to do so. Persisting in any similar actions after being issued a warning will result in a technical foul.

Sincerely,

Mike