



CHAPTER 12 • OFFICIALS

12.1 – INTRODUCTION

Officials play an important role in making thousands of events run smoothly. From working national championships to officiating high-school track meets, officials are essential for maintaining the highest levels of integrity at all levels of competition. This section offers resources for current officials, as well as those seeking certification.

USA Track & Field provides a national program for the training and certifying officials for the sports of track and field, race walking and long-distance running. This is administered locally by USATF Associations through a Certification Chair and committee structure.

USATF Officials adhere to a Code of Ethics and Performance Guidelines which promotes an athlete centered proactive philosophy of officiating and service to the sport. Officials seek to provide objective oversight to ensure that each athlete is given an equal and fair opportunity to compete.

The National Track and Field Officials Committee is committed to promoting racial and gender diversity. This is being achieved through an active program of recruitment and creating increased opportunities for major officiating responsibilities, particularly for previously under-represented groups, in all event officiating skill areas.

12.2 – CERTIFICATION

How to Become Certified

To become a USATF Certified Track and Field Official one must:

1. Be a current year member of USATF.
2. Complete a New Officials Certification, or Recertification Application Form.
3. Make payment of the certification fee to your certification chair (a \$20.00 national fee, plus any additional Association-imposed fee).
4. Complete the appropriate rules review (open-book test).
5. Complete SafeSport training.
6. Complete the background check.
7. Provide a current photo.
8. Complete any additional requirements established by your association

Note: a current USATF membership number is required in order to receive credit for the SafeSport Training and the background check

Certification Levels

Training and certification of officials is central to USATF's goal of ensuring fair and safe competitive opportunities for athletes. The training and certification processes promote a serious and professional approach to officiating and demonstrate an official's commitment to excellence. As an

official gains experience, exposure to correct officiating practices, and additional training, USATF recognizes this skill development through [progressive levels of certification](#): Apprentice to Association to National to Master.

New officials will now start off at the Apprentice level. We've designed the Apprentice level so that new officials can spend time learning a number of events and being exposed to many different areas of track & field. We want to make sure that we're doing all we can going forward to train well rounded officials.



As an official gains experience, exposure to correct officiating practices, and additional training, USATF recognizes this skill development through progressive levels of certification: Association to National to Master.

Association: After serving as an Apprentice level official (preferably for at least two years), an official may seek advancement to Association level. Association level officials should be able to take on more responsibility in home association meets. To advance, the official must submit a resume' listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior two years, submit a letter of recommendation from a National or Master level official, and indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period to their Association Certification Chair. They must also satisfactorily complete an open book Association level rules review and meet any Association-specific requirements for attaining Association level certification.

National: After serving as an Association level official (preferably for at least two years), an official may seek advancement to National level. A National level official should be able to head up an event at a major meet in an Association and work as an official at national championships. To advance, the official must submit a resume' listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior two years, submit letters of recommendation from two Master level officials or one Master level and one National level official, and indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period to their Association Certification Chair. They must also satisfactorily complete an open book National level rules review and meet any Association-specific requirements for attaining National level certification.

Master: After serving as a National level official (preferably for at least two years), an official may seek advancement to Master level. A Master level official should be able to serve as a head official at major regional and national meets. To advance, the official must submit a resume' listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior two years, submit letters of recommendation from three Master level officials, and indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period to their Association Certification Chair. They must also satisfactorily complete an open book Master level rules review and meet any Association-specific requirements for attaining Master level certification.

To better differentiate certain disciplines, we've split the following disciplines off from the main system of certification levels. These disciplines are certified using a number of grades, customized for each discipline. In addition, these disciplines have custom requirements for certification.

- Referees - All Types
- Combined Event Coordinator

- Technical Manager
- Electronic Recorder
- Electronic Measurer
- Electronic Manager

Certification and Skill Ratings Valid Only for Current Olympiad

All certification levels are revisited each 4-Year Olympiad. Renewal at any level is based on recent officiating activity and demonstrated competency during the preceding 4-year Olympiad. Thus, if an official has not been active or her/his skill level at a given officiating skill area has not remained to the standard for that level, she/he may have either the overall rating reduced one level or the rating for one or more skill areas reduced one level during the Olympiad recertification process. Retired officials are nominated for “Emeritus” status in recognition of their considerable contribution to the sport.

Eligibility for Officiating National and International Meets

Only those holding the “National” or “Master” level certifications are considered to be eligible to officiate in Championship meets conducted by USATF outside of the individual’s home association. Generally, competition officials for major events are selected by a Selection Committee which includes representatives of USATF Standing Sport Committees, the Officials Committee and a representative of the local organizing committee.

Officials Serve without Expectation of Compensation

Officials are in service to the sport. All officials serve without expectation of compensation, although Championship meets are expected to provide free or reduced cost lodging and meals and other forms of appreciation to those who officiate at the competition.

Association Certification Chairs

To learn more about your local certification program, please contact your Association Certification Chair.

Please visit <http://www.usatf.org/Resources-for---/-groups-officials-.aspx> to learn more about certification, rules and training of an official. to learn more about certification, rules and training of an official.