

Officials Pathway

The purpose of this document is to ensure the proper training of all officials as they progress through different levels of officiating, focusing primarily on their first 3-4 years. Using this pathway, referees can determine their season goals, work towards them, and know what is expected of them. Referee Allocators can more easily determine which referees can ref which levels, and can assist in developing their referees as much as possible.

Notes: Minor alterations to the pathway may have to be made to accommodate association's specific needs. Also, this is based on the most common progression for referees during these stages. Some referees may need an adapted pathway if they are developing at a slower or faster rate.

New Officials (Year One)

Phase 1: Mentoring: A new official will do their first three games with a mentor: One step 1, one step 2 or 3, and one U12C. If the official feels confident in their abilities, they can begin reffing on their own. If not, more games with a mentor will be scheduled.

Phase 2: Introductory Evaluation: An evaluator will come to the game and give an introduction evaluation to new officials. This will be used as a development opportunity, giving more feedback and guidance based on their performance. The evaluator can be there to answer questions at half time, and to give insight as to what to expect from evaluations. New officials will be given a feedback form as per usual evaluations. This will occur once or twice depending on the official's progress. This should occur shortly after the mentoring phase, encouraging lots of feedback and support from the start.

Note to Evaluators: The purpose of this is to acquaint new refs with the evaluation process, and to share the importance of feedback. Walk them through the steps of what takes place, and please advise them on proper evaluation conduct. This may mean waiting until the evaluator finishes speaking to start changing, or how important it is to implement the feedback given.

Phase 3: Evaluation in New Year: All new officials will be given time to learn on their own, and will be given an evaluation in January, February, **or** March to assess their progress.

**In their first year, officials are expected to ref all levels of U10, as well as U12C.*

Referee Level One (Year Two)

Phase 1: U12B: Begin season with levels that referees are familiar with. Next, the referee will be put on a U12B game with an experienced official. The experienced official should be made aware that this is their first time on U12B, and to let them make mistakes and make their own calls. Referee Allocators/RIC's should contact the referee after their first U12B game to see how it went and find out how they feel with the change of pace.

Phase Two: Evaluation 1: Evaluation before the New Year on a U10 Step 3 game or a U12B game (preferably).

Phase Three: Evaluation 2: Evaluation in the New Year on a U12B game. If the referee feels confident and showing positive progress, they should be scheduled on a U12A game with an experienced partner.

**In their second year, officials are expected to become comfortable with U12B, and hopefully progress onto U12A.*

Note to Allocator/RIC: An experienced official at the U12B and U12A levels is a Level 2 official. It is crucial that the referees doing their first games at these levels are paired with an experienced partner.

Referee Level One (3+ Years)

Phase 1: Getting Comfortable with U12A: Begin the season with U12A games, and assess for comfort level. At this stage, the level one referee is still fairly new to U12A, so they will still need an experienced partner. Once they are comfortable with this level of play, they can proceed to phase 2. Comfortability should be assessed through evaluations or by being watched by the RIC.

Note to Allocator/RIC: At these levels, it is important to pair developing referees with experienced partners. At U12A, partner them with a Level 2 or 3 official, or an official with more U12A experience.

Phase 2: U14B: If the referee is ready (determined by an evaluator and/or the RIC), they can be assigned to a U14B game with an experienced official. They are encouraged to contact the RIC after their first U14B game to see how it went, ask any questions, and find out how they feel with the change of pace. Have at least a couple more U14B games before Phase 3.

Note to Allocator/RIC: It is recommended that a referee is paired with a Level 3 official for their first U14B game. If no Level 3 official is available, pair them with a very experienced Level 2 official.

Phase 3: Evaluation on U14B: Assign the referee to a U14B game with an experienced partner, and assign a Regional Evaluator. This gives the referee an opportunity to get a Level 2 evaluation. Based on their success, it can be determined if they are eligible for the level two clinic the following season, or if they need another year to develop. Some may not get a Level 2 evaluation, and may still be eligible for the clinic.

**In their third year, referees are expected to become more comfortable with U12A, and hopefully progress to U14B. For level one officials with 3+ years' experience, development at the U14B level is key. This may require off-ice assessments and more on-ice evaluations.*

Referee Level Two

Referees at this stage will be reffing primarily U12A and U14B for the association, and will fill in the younger age groups when needed. As newer officials are brought up, the level two's will start having less games with their home association. As this progression takes place, they should start officiating more and more games for NARRA. Level two officials will be encouraged to travel to more tournaments and

progress at higher levels of play. If they have taken the level two clinic but have not received their two level-two evaluations, they can contact either the NARRA Referee Allocator or their local association Allocator to coordinate evaluations.

Referee Level 3+

Officials at this stage will not receive regular games from their home association. They may be asked to officiate at the U12A or U14B levels with inexperienced officials. They may also participate in the mentoring program if they are interested.

Mentoring Program

Officials who are Level 3 or higher can mentor new officials if they are interested. This is not a requirement for Level 3 officials. *These officials must display accountability, punctuality, a positive attitude, and have a genuine interest in teaching new officials.* This will ensure the new referees are being shown the expectations we have for referees at all levels. The role of a mentor is very supportive, which must be displayed on and off the ice. For games, mentors are expected at the arena 20 minutes before the game. They are to introduce themselves and answer any questions the new referees may have. They will be on the ice for the entirety of the game, skating with the new official(s). Mentors should not be using their whistle unless it is an absolute necessity (put whistle in pocket). Teaching the basics of pre and post-game duties, basic positioning, and ring placement, mentors will explain what is happening as much as possible. For example, a mentor may see a penalty and tell the new official to blow their whistle. They will then walk through the penalty assessment steps with the new official. Once the player is put in the penalty box, the mentor can take an extra moment to ask what the new official saw and go over what they did. It is also very encouraged for the mentors to touch base with the allocator as to how the new officials are progressing in their first few games.

**A pre-season meeting or email between the local RIC and their mentors is encouraged to make sure all are on the same page with expectations and rules at these levels.*