



Elite Referee Program

Development Group Expectations

Instruction

Attend a minimum of three (3) CNRA Referee Academy Elite Referee Training sessions annually

Attend 75% of the monthly training webinars annually

Participate in 100% of the group training exercises annually

Fitness Standards

Maintain the gender and track-appropriate National fitness standard

Match Assignments

Work assignments from the National Assignor on two (2) weekend days per month

Evaluation

Maintain successful evaluations from National Referee Coaches and other assessors/mentors

Pass an advanced Laws of the Game test administered by CNRA annually

Tracking

No track decision (Referee, Assistant Referee) required

Referees should be actively working both referee and assistant referee assignments

Match Administration

Each match official in the Elite Referee Program will be expected to follow the CNRA Elite Referee Program Match Administration Policy

Professional Presentation

Each Elite Referee Program official will be expected to follow the CNRA Professional Match Dress Code Policy

Social Media Use

Each Elite Referee Program official will be expected to follow the CNRA Social Media and Communication Policy

Conduct

Each Elite Referee Program official will be expected to maintain a professional demeanor at all times representing CNRA

Inability to meet these minimum expectations could result in removal from the Elite Referee Program



Elite Referee Program

Assignment and Assessment Policy

Assignment Availability

Maintain updated availability at least six weeks out at all times.

Only note in U.S. Soccer Game Officials the days and/or times that you are unavailable.

If you have not made yourself unavailable in U.S. Soccer Game Officials, expect assignments on one Academy match day per weekend. Repeated declining of games due to inadequate availability updating will result in loss of future assignment consideration.

Assignment Schedule

Assignments for Elite Referee Program officials will be made four weeks in advance.

Assignment Accept/Decline Timeline

All assignments must be accepted or declined within three days.

Any deviations from this timeline must be requested in writing upon receipt of assignment.

Assignment Fulfillment

Once a match is accepted, the commitment must be honored. Withdrawing from assignments, particularly to accept alternative assignments outside of the recommendations of the U.S. Soccer Assignment Priority protocol, will result in loss of future assignment consideration.

Assignment Limitations

Elite Referee Program officials who are assigned professional matches (NPSL, PDL, USL, NASL or equivalent) are limited to that single assignment on that calendar day.

Elite Referee Program officials who are assigned a pair of Development Academy matches are limited to officiating those matches only on that calendar day.

National Referee Coaches

Elite Referee Program officials who show the most potential to officiate professional matches will be eligible for assessments by National Referee Coaches. Eligibility will be determined by the Director of Referee Development, in consultation with feedback from referee mentors, and officials will be notified as to their eligibility for assessments by National Referee Coaches.

Assessment Request

Elite Referee Program officials will coordinate with the Director of Referee Development regarding their annual assessment needs. When possible, advance coordination of assignments and assessments will be made to maximize the effectiveness of the State Assessor and National Referee Coach pool.

Officials may submit assessment requests to either Matthew Buckman, Director of Referee Development, or Alex Marquand, State Assessor Coordinator, as appropriate.

Inability to meet these minimum expectations could result in removal from the Elite Referee Program



Elite Referee Program

Match Administration Policy

Expense Report Submission

For any matches requiring expense reports to be submitted to the host team, the fourth official will contact the referee crew five (5) days before the match and request necessary expense report details from each official. The fourth official will then complete all expense reports for the entire crew and submit to the host team no later than 72 hours prior to the match.

Referee Crew Match Confirmation Email

The referee will send a match confirmation email to the entire referee crew, including referee coach or mentor, no later than 72 hours prior to the match. The email must contain match date, time and location; arrival time; arrival, departure and warm up attire; any potential carpool availability; any notes or helpful advance information on the teams or significance of the match; and request for response to confirm receipt of email and the arrival time.

Match Conclusion Email

Each match official will send the Director of Referee Development an email within 48 hours of the conclusion of the match with a brief summary of the match, focusing primarily on points of emphasis for the individual official. Emails must be honest and forthright, as they will be used for the continued development of the referee.

Match Report Completion

On matches with a fourth official, the fourth official is responsible for all report writing, including the match report and any supplemental or send off reports. The referee is responsible for the formal submission of the match report.

On matches without a fourth official, the referee is responsible for the completion of all reports.

Match Report Submission

Unless otherwise noted by the specific competition handbook, all required reports must be submitted online by the referee within 24 hours of the conclusion of the match. Exempting matches starting after 5:00 pm where the referee travels over one (1) hour each way to a match site, reports for Academy matches on Sundays must be submitted that evening. For exempted matches, match reports must be submitted as soon as possible on Monday, but no later than the end of the day Monday.

Inability to meet these minimum expectations could result in removal from the Elite Referee Program



Elite Referee Program

Professional Match Dress Code Policy

USL, MLS Pre-season, U.S. Open Cup (Third Round and higher), International Friendlies

The referee assigned to the match dictates arrival and departure attire (either full suit or slacks/polo).

If the match referee does not dictate arrival and departure attire, slacks and polo is the default attire.

Elite Referee Program match officials will depart in the same attire in which they arrived unless otherwise dictated by the referee assigned to the match.

If the match referee allows different attire for departure, minimum expectation for departure attire is slacks and polo, as described below.

Full Suit Attire

Men: Black, dark blue or dark grey suit (pants and coat matching)
 White dress shirt
 Red or blue tie (U.S. Soccer tie preferred but not required)
 Black dress shoes

Women: Black, dark blue or dark grey suit (pants and coat matching)
 White dress shirt or business blouse
 No neckwear required
 Black dress shoes

Slacks and Polo Attire

All: Black or dark grey slacks
 Black, dark blue or white U.S. Soccer Referee Program polo
 Black dress shoes

Warm Up Attire

Black athletic shirt (U.S. Soccer Referee Program or PRO branding as appropriate)

Referee Kits

Full selection of new-style short and long sleeve Official Sports jerseys required

If a locker room with showers is not available or functional, Elite Referee Program match officials may depart in Adidas or Nike full length athletic pants, running shoes and a U.S. Soccer Referee Program polo.

PDL, NPSL, U.S. Open Cup (Second Round and lower)

Elite Referee Program match officials will arrive and depart in the same attire.

Arrival and Departure Attire

All: Black or dark grey slacks
 Black, dark blue or white U.S. Soccer Referee Program polo
 Black dress shoes

Warm Up Attire

Black athletic shirt (U.S. Soccer Referee Program or PRO branding as appropriate)

Referee Kits

Full selection of new-style short and long sleeve Official Sports jerseys required

If a locker room with showers is not available or functional, Elite Referee Program match officials may depart in Adidas or Nike full length athletic pants, running shoes and a U.S. Soccer Referee Program polo.

Non-Professional Matches

Arrive and depart all fields or venues with no locker rooms in referee shorts, running shoes and athletic tee shirt (U.S. Soccer Referee Program branding preferred but not required)

- No flip flops or sandals
- No team branded jerseys or tee shirts
- No referee jerseys or socks

If you are not actively working a match, do not wear referee gear

- Do not walk around and watch games in referee attire
- If you are going to the bathroom between games or at half time, put on a jacket or remove your jersey

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Elite Referee Program

Social Media and Communication Policy

Social Media Use

Elite Referee Program officials have the potential to work high visibility professional matches that come with a tremendous amount of scrutiny. Accordingly, an official's online presence must remain professional, non-partisan and unbiased.

Do not utilize social media to criticize or question referees that you see on television.

Do not utilize social media to complain or talk about other referees at any level.

Do not utilize social media to complain about a coach, player, team or spectator.

Do not wear logos of teams on apparel or gear.

Do not express any fan sentiments.

Do not utilize social media to communicate political, religious or otherwise provocative statements.

Please remember: pictures taken by others can also be posted, so be sensitive to the situations in which you put yourself and how pictures can be construed. Be smart.

Email Use

Elite Referee Program officials should have a professional email address that includes their full name in the email address (ex. johnsmith17@gmail.com).

Elite Referee Program officials need to check their email daily and provide timely responses to assignors, administrators and match officials.

Elite Referee Program officials must maintain a professional tone in all email communication with assignors, administrators and match officials.

Game Officials Use

Elite Referee Program officials should have a professionally presented headshot connected to all Game Official accounts.

Inability to meet these minimum expectations could result in removal from the Elite Referee Program



Elite Referee Program

U.S. Soccer Assignment Priority Protocol

While each official is expected to keep the assignments he or she accepts, there are certain occasions where a referee should be released from a lower level assignment to officiate in a higher-level competition.

To this end, the following games are listed by priority for assignment:

- International and senior National Team games assigned by U.S. Soccer
- Games assigned by the Professional Referee Organization (PRO)
- Youth National Team games assigned by U.S. Soccer
- Competitions (regional and national) assigned directly by U.S. Soccer's affiliated members. Includes but is not limited to:
 - USASA
 - US Youth Soccer
 - US Club Soccer
- League games assigned by U.S. Soccer
- Competitions (state level) assigned directly by U.S. Soccer's affiliated members. Includes but is not limited to:
 - State Adult Associations
 - State Youth Associations

Please note that this policy does not apply:

- Within 72 hours of the scheduled game time unless an emergency situation exists
- When a substantial financial commitment has been made for the assignment (e.g., non-refundable airline tickets)

Responsibility of officials:

- Keep the lines of communication open about upcoming national and international appointments as far in advance as possible
- Communicate the receipt of a higher priority appointment to their assignor as soon as possible
- Report an assignor that refuses to release the official from a higher priority assignment to their State Referee Administrator and the U.S. Soccer Referee Department

Responsibility of assignors:

- Identify the highly experienced officials on your assignment roster who are likely to be assigned to a higher priority assignment and always be prepared to fill these slots on an emergency basis
- Cooperate with officials and other assignors on those rare occasions when the game priority policy is invoked
- Report any concerns regarding officials to the State Referee Administrator