



**Ohio Valley Region
Officials' Handbook**

2023-2024 Season



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I. Introduction

This manual provides information for USA Volleyball referees in the Ohio Valley Region (“OVR”) regarding OVR policies, procedures, and requirements. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Obtaining a certification
- Maintaining certification
- Upgrading a certification
- “Good Standing” policy
- Member sanctions
- Tournament procedures
- Various other functions and activities related to officiating in the OVR

The common components for each referee certification are:

- Timely membership renewal/registration
- Current USAV background screen
- SafeSport training course
- Concussion management course (Ohio and Pennsylvania state law)
- Clinic attendance
- Completion of rules and scoring exams
- Demonstration of scoring proficiency
- Practical, on-court evaluations
- Officiating a minimum of two OVR-sanctioned tournaments each season

II. Obtaining a USA Volleyball Referee Certification in the Ohio Valley Region

2.01 Independent Contractor Status

Referees who are certified by the Ohio Valley Region/USA Volleyball are not employees of the Ohio Valley Region or USA Volleyball. All referees serve as independent contractors when officiating at OVR-USAV sanctioned events. The term as an independent contractor lasts for one membership season (September 1 to August 31 each year) and must be annually renewed by registering as an OVR-USAV member. (*See also Section III - Maintaining a Certification in the Ohio Valley Region.*) The term includes all officiating activities, including but not limited to, officiating, serving as a clinician, participating with referee evaluations/training/certifications, tournament staff positions, and travel to/from OVR-sanctioned events.

As independent contractors, referees are responsible for maintaining appropriate financial records for tax-filing purposes. When a referee makes more than \$600 from the OVR or other regional hiring entity (i.e., a tournament host or organized volleyball club), a 1099 IRS form may be issued to the referee by the OVR or hiring entity.

In addition, referees/independent contractors are not entitled to benefits, including but not limited to workers' compensation. Referees should obtain their own medical and disability insurance for officiating-related work. However, as OVR-USAV members, all referees are covered by USA Volleyball's liability and secondary health insurances during sanctioned events.

The Ohio Valley Region is not obligated to guarantee a minimum number of officiating-related assignments; however, referees must meet minimum requirements each season to maintain their certification and "good standing" in the Ohio Valley Region as a referee. (*See also Section III - Maintaining a Certification in the Ohio Valley Region and Section 7.06 - "Good Standing" Policy for Referees.*)

2.02 Minimum Age Requirements

While USA Volleyball has not established minimum age requirements to become certified as a professional referee, in the Ohio Valley Region, we recommend that prospective referees have attained the age of 17 years by January 1st of the season in which the referee becomes certified. Consideration will be given to those younger than 17 upon request to the OVR Referees' Chair.

2.03 Prospective Referee Registration Process

STEP 1: Prospective referees express their interest in obtaining a USAV referee certification by first registering online at the OVR website (www.ovr.org) for one of the OVR Prospective Referee Clinics; see also 2.04 below. The sites and times for these clinics are posted on the OVR website by mid-September each year. The clinic attendance fee must be paid online prior to clinic attendance. The registration page can be found at:

https://www.ovr.org/officiating/new_official_signup.php

STEP 2: Once a candidate has registered online to attend a Prospective Referee Clinic, the USAV membership and background screening process must be completed. As of the 2023-2024 USAV season, the OVR-USAV membership fee for a "First Year Official" is \$47, and the USAV background screening process is \$14. The membership and background screen must be completed prior to participating in a practical on-court training/evaluation session; see also Section 2.07 below. Background screen information is found on the OVR website: <https://www.ovr.org/background/index.php>.

Candidates who do not satisfy the background screening process may be refunded only the USAV-OVR membership registration fee unless they wish to remain a USA Volleyball member. The background screening fee is not refundable.

Current OVR-USAV members do not need to pay the USAV membership fee a second time, and those with a current USAV background screen do not need to be re-screened.

STEP 3: SafeSport training must also be completed prior to participating in an on-court training/evaluation session; see 2.08 below.

2.04 OVR Theoretical Officiating Clinics

Attendance during a pre-season OVR Prospective Referee Clinic is mandatory for all prospective referees. The clinic may be presented in person or may be virtual (online). Attendance at any other clinics do not fulfill this requirement. Clinic registration must be completed online at the OVR website prior to attendance, including online payment of the clinic fee. The clinic fee is non-refundable; see also 2.03 above.

A wealth of information is presented at these clinics. Topics include the rules/scoring exams and evaluation processes; officiating philosophies; scoring; OVR policies and procedures; FIVB and USA Volleyball rules; and rule comparisons with the high school and collegiate rules sets. The current USA Volleyball Indoor Rules Book will be distributed at either an in-person clinic or at the on-court training session. A PDF version of the USAV Rules Book may also be downloaded at:

<https://usavolleyball.org/resources-for-officials/rulebooks-and-interpretations/>

2.05 Becoming a Referee Candidate

At the conclusion of each clinic, prospective referees who wish to continue with the certification process will select a training/evaluation tournament to attend. The training/evaluation fee must be paid online at the OVR website.

Only candidates who have attended one of the new referees' clinics and submitted the training/evaluation fee will be accepted. The training/evaluation fee will be returned to any applicant not accepted into the certification program for any reason. This fee will not be refunded to an accepted candidate who does not subsequently attend his/her assigned training/evaluation site or who does not obtain a certification upon completion of the process; see also Section 2.07 below. (Note: The theoretical clinic fee is non-refundable.) Specific questions about the clinics, rules exams, or training/evaluation can be directed to the OVR Referees' Chair or the Coordinator of New Referees.

2.06 Rules & Scoring Exams and Online Training Modules

Prospective referees must take the designated USA Volleyball online rules and scoring exams. Exam instructions will be distributed upon completion of the certification process and will also be available on the OVR website. The exams may be taken with rulebook assistance.

In addition, the OVR New Referee Training curriculum must be completed on the USA Volleyball Academy website. Instructions for completing the online training modules will be distributed via email and will be available on the OVR website. The curriculum includes various video training modules to help prospective or new referees become familiar with USAV rules, officiating techniques, and special points of emphasis.

2.07 Practical Evaluation

After attending a theoretical clinic (see 2.04 above), prospective referees will be scheduled to attend a practical, on-court training/evaluation tournament. Candidate openings are limited at each training/evaluation tournament. Candidates should be willing to travel a reasonable distance to attend a training tournament, as needed.

Refunds will not be granted to candidates who do not subsequently attend their training/evaluation tournament assignment, i.e., a "no-call/no-show." Candidates who do not successfully complete the certification process are not refunded any fees. Candidates, who immediately decline their training/evaluation assignment or withdraw after being notified of the assignment, will be refunded the training/evaluation fee.

On-court training includes working as first and second referee, scorer, assistant scorer/Libero tracker, and line judge. Candidates will then be evaluated as 1st referee, 2nd referee, and scorer to determine their competency to receive a referee certification. Candidates must successfully pass all three positions to obtain a USAV-OVR certification. Upon successful completion of the evaluation phase, an OVR Junior Regional or USAV Provisional referee certification will be awarded to the candidate.

Although the evaluation phase is pass/fail, the OVR "Referee Coaches" strive to provide hands-on learning and training, as we want each candidate adequately prepared to begin the season. It is imperative that candidates study all available materials prior to attendance. Although we offer training, this process is not intended as a full course for teaching the art of



officiating. Our goal is to determine whether prospective referees have basic officiating skills to competently facilitate and administer USAV matches and tournaments in the Ohio Valley Region.

2.08 SafeSport Training

All OVR-USAV members who are associated with juniors' competitions are required to complete the SafeSport Training Course offered by USA Volleyball through the U.S. Center for SafeSport. The course can be accessed through the USAV website (<https://usavolleyball.org/safesport/>), the SafeSport website (<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>), or through USAV's SportsEngine Member Management System (https://user.sportngin.com/users/sign_in). It is best to complete the course through the SportsEngine link associated with the candidate's USAV-OVR membership.

SafeSport is an initiative sponsored by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee to protect our youth from all types of abuse and misconduct - sexual, physical, and emotional abuse; bullying, harassment or threats; or hazing. USA Volleyball is committed to creating safe, fun environments for our youth.

For questions about the SafeSport program or to report an incident, contact the OVR SafeSport Coordinator, Diane Hood (Hood@ovr.org).

2.09 State Concussion Laws

State laws require all adults associated with youth/junior sports to be trained in recognizing the signs and symptoms of a concussion. A concussion protocol training course is offered online by the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) and is free of charge - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61151/concussion-in-sports>.

A concussion training certificate is good for three years and must be renewed upon expiration by re-taking the online course. Referees must submit a copy of the course completion certificate to the OVR Compliance & Verifications Manager, Steve Donahue (Donahue@ovr.org).

2.10 State of Pennsylvania Background Check

The State of Pennsylvania requires additional screening and background checks for adults working with children. These screenings are in addition to USAV's background check. OVR referees living or working in Pennsylvania must be sure to adhere to that state's requirements.

2.11 Probationary Status for New Referees

During the first season for all new referees, their status will be considered "probationary" to allow OVR staff and Referee Coaches to gain more complete knowledge of a new referee's capabilities. The OVR reserves the right to reduce (Provisional to Junior Regional referee) or rescind (loss of certification) the certification for a new referee who ultimately performs below minimum standards as defined in Section IV below, or who exhibits unprofessional behavior or ethics, or who does not subsequently complete other certification requirements, including but not limited to online exams and training modules.

Junior Regional referees should not officiate USA Volleyball events outside of the Ohio Valley Region. Provisional referees with less than a full season of experience should contact the OVR Referees' Chair prior to accepting any assignment outside of the Ohio Valley Region.

First-year referees, who do not officiate the minimum number of tournaments required (*See Section 7.06A - "Good Standing Policy for Referees"*), may need re-evaluation/re-certification at a tournament designated by the OVR Referees' Chair at the beginning of the subsequent season. This must be completed prior to the referee accepting any officiating assignments at a sanctioned tournament. Failure to do so will result in the referee not being certified to officiate.

III. Maintaining a Certification in the Ohio Valley Region

To maintain a USA Volleyball referee certification in the Ohio Valley Region, the following requirements must be fulfilled annually:

3.01 Online Registration

By September 1 each year, USA Volleyball's online registration system (SportsEngine) will be open. Referees should complete the online registration process as quickly as possible thereafter, as well as any related fees and paperwork.

3.02 Membership Renewal and Online Forms

Membership renewals are completed on USA Volleyball's member management system, SportsEngine (https://user.sportngin.com/users/sign_in). Registration fees are paid with a credit/debit card. Registrants must also complete any necessary online forms, such as the Code of Ethics, USAV Waiver, etc.

3.03 USAV Background Screen

A USAV background screen is required every year. Background screen costs are not included with the annual USAV-OVR membership fee. Background screens from other organizations do not fulfill USAV requirements.

3.04 SafeSport Training

(See Section 2.08 - SafeSport Training, above.) After completing the core SafeSport Training modules, a SafeSport Refresher is required annually and must be completed prior to officiating any USAV/OVR sanctioned events.

3.05 Concussion Law

A concussion training certificate is good for a three-year period and must be renewed upon expiration by re-taking the online course, which is free of charge. Referees must submit a copy of the course completion certificate to the OVR Compliance & Verification staff, Steve Donahue (Donahue@ovr.org). (See Section 2.10 - "Ohio Concussion Law.")

3.06 Officiating Clinic Attendance

Attendance at an OVR officiating clinic is required annually, either in-person or virtually (online), whichever is offered. A nominal clinic fee will be charged to each attendee to cover the cost of facility rental, materials, etc. Clinics are held at various locations around the region from November through early January. Failure to attend a clinic will result in the referee being placed on probation for the remainder of that season. (See the Member Sanctions Section for additional information.) NOTE: Attendance at a USAV clinic presented in another USAV region, or a USAV National Clinic, may fulfill this requirement with prior notification to the OVR Referees' Chair. Completion of online training modules on the USAV Academy website may also fulfill this requirement.

3.07 Rules and Scoring Exams

Each season, all returning referees are required to take the designated USA Volleyball rules and scoring exams. The Ohio Valley Region utilizes the USAV Academy to administer all exams and online training modules, which are accessible through USAV SportsEngine. The OVR Curriculum includes all required video modules, including rules and scoring exams. National-level officials must complete the USAV National Referee (or Scorer) Curriculum, and the associated rules and scoring exams. The OVR Existing Referee Curriculum does NOT contain the required national-level courses or exams. The national-level exams fulfill OVR requirements. It is not necessary to submit exam results or corrections to the respective OVR Referees' or Scorers' Chair.

Failure to complete the coursework and exams may result in probation, as described in Section IX - Member Sanctions.

IV. USA Volleyball Certifications & Minimum Standards in the Ohio Valley Region

The minimum standards for each certification level, as well as the levels of play that each certification level is entitled to officiate, are indicated below. NOTE: For girls' junior competition, "R" denotes Regional team designations, "A" denotes American team designations, "N" denotes National team designations. In addition, "S" denotes the Select division, "E" is the Elite division, and "U" denotes "and under", which includes American and/or Regional teams.

4.01 Junior Regional Referee

A Junior Regional referee certification is the basic entry-level certification for referees in the OVR. This certification is awarded to a person who, among other things, has met the following minimum standards as established by the OVR Regional Training/Evaluation Team:

- Whistle timing/quality and use of proper signals
- Understands ball handling as it relates to various playing techniques and player/team contacts
- Exhibits a basic understanding of volleyball playing rules
- Shows competency as a first referee and demonstrates reasonable match control for 15R or younger competition
- Teamwork concepts: Ability to work with junior officiating crew
- Demonstrates basic understanding of USAV scoring and scoresheet
- Professional approach: Positive demeanor; attitude; shows adaptability and desire to learn

Junior Regional referees exhibit basic officiating skills but need additional experience before progressing to the Provisional referee certification level.

A Junior Regional referee is authorized to accept assignments to officiate the following levels of play at OVR-sanctioned events:

- All Girls' or Boys' 10s, 11s, 12s, 13s, 14s, and Girls' 15R junior volleyball tournaments in the Ohio Valley Region

NOTE: Junior Regional referees are not recommended to officiate outside the Ohio Valley Region.

4.02 Provisional Referee

A Provisional referee certification is the entry-level USA Volleyball certification for referees. This certification is awarded to a person who has met the minimum standards for Junior Regional referees as noted in 4.01 above, as well as the following:

- Proper professional demeanor and skill as a first referee
- Second referee: Exhibits basic understanding of responsibilities and performs common duties efficiently
- Expanded rules knowledge including back-row player identification
- Understands and applies individual and delay sanctions
- Aware of basic alignment and overlap issues
- Demonstrates reasonable match control for 16/17/18 American or Regional competition
- Proficient with scoring and Libero tracking systems

A Provisional referee is authorized to accept assignments to officiate the following levels of play at OVR-sanctioned events:

- Girls' 10s, 11s, 12s, any 13s level, any 14s level, any 15s level, **16-A/R, 17R, and 18R**
- Boys' 10s-16s
- Men's/Women's B, BB and Women's A

NOTE: Provisional referees with less than two full seasons of experience should contact the OVR Referees' Chair prior to accepting any USAV assignment outside the Ohio Valley Region.

4.03 Regional Referee

A Regional referee certification is the highest-level USA Volleyball certification the Ohio Valley Region can award to a referee. This certification is awarded to a referee who has held a Provisional certification for at least one season, and who has met the minimum standards for Junior Regional and Provisional referees as noted in 4.01 and 4.02 respectively, as well as the following:

- Attention to professional detail: demeanor, attitude, appearance, teamwork, time management
- Exhibits competence, confidence, and match control as a first referee
- Properly focused as second referee; demonstrates competence in primary areas of R2 responsibility
- Recognizes advanced alignment and overlap issues
- Exhibits teamwork with first referee; offers appropriate discreet help including back-row faults
- Willing to serve as role model and mentor for lesser experienced referees
- Aptitude to deal with difficult match situations
- Efficient in resolving scoring issues

A Regional referee is authorized to accept assignments to officiate the following levels of play at OVR-sanctioned events:

- Any level of competition within the Ohio Valley Region
- Also authorized to officiate sanctioned, local competitions within any other USA Volleyball region with confirmation of respective referee chairs; eligible for select USA Volleyball national events with notification of and recommendation from the OVR Referees' Chair

4.04 Junior National Referee

A Junior National referee certification is awarded by USA Volleyball at the USA Volleyball Girls' Junior National Championships or other designated national evaluation site.

A Junior National referee is authorized to accept assignment to officiate the following levels of play:

- All sanctioned competitions within any USA Volleyball region
- The USA Volleyball Girls' or Boys' Junior National Championships
- USAV High Performance Championships (if Junior National referees are requested)
- U.S. Open National Championships for adults (if Junior National referees are requested)

4.05 National Referee

A National referee certification is awarded by USA Volleyball at the USA Volleyball Girls' 18s Junior National Championships or other designated national evaluation site.

A National referee is authorized to accept assignment to officiate the following levels of play:

- All sanctioned competitions within any USA Volleyball region
- The U.S. Open National Championships and the USA Volleyball Girls' or Boys' Junior National Championships
- USAV High Performance Championships
- Other events designated by USA Volleyball

4.06 Retired Referees

National and Junior National referees in good standing, who have held their certification for five and six years, respectively, may apply to the USAV Director of Officials for voluntary retired status by February 15 of each season. To retain certification, a National or Junior National referee (retired) must register annually with USA Volleyball and the appropriate RVA and remain in good standing with his/her RVA. Remaining in good standing within the RVA includes satisfying all requirements for re-certification as a Regional referee.

A USA National or Junior National referee (retired) is authorized to wear the appropriate patch while officiating at USA Volleyball-sanctioned events. A retired national-level referee will be compensated at the Regional referee pay rate when working within the OVR. A retired referee may apply for re-certification.

A Regional referee, who has held that certification for at least three years, may request retired status from the OVR Referees' Chair. To retain retired status, a Regional referee must meet the following annual requirements: register with the OVR-USAV, attend an OVR officiating clinic, and complete the designated online rules and scoring exams. The Regional referee (retired) will be listed in the OVR referees' database; however, he/she is not eligible to officiate OVR-sanctioned USAV events.

Provisional and Junior Regional referees are not eligible for retired status.

4.07 Referees Returning After Extended Absence

To regain a Regional certification after a one- or two-year absence, the referee must meet all requirements for that certification (membership renewal, background screening, SafeSport training, concussion management course, clinic attendance and exams) plus successfully complete a re-certification evaluation at a designated event. These requirements must be fulfilled prior to accepting officiating assignments for the season in which the referee returns. At the conclusion of the re-evaluation/re-certification process, if the referee does not meet minimum Regional referee standards, a Provisional or Junior Regional referee certification may be awarded. For a Regional referee returning after three or more years' absence, participation in the New Referee Certification Program may be required.

A Provisional or Junior Regional referee certification may be regained after a one-year absence from OVR-USAV officiating by completing a re-certification evaluation as requested by the OVR Referees' Chair. The re-certification evaluation should be completed prior to participating in any other officiating assignments. Attendance at a pre-season OVR Officiating Clinic for is also required, as well as any other requirements for that certification.

If a Provisional or Junior referee does not renew that certification for a second consecutive season, he/she may be required to complete the New Referee Certification Program during the season in which he/she returns.

4.08 Scorer Certifications and Upgrades

USA Volleyball offers Provisional, Regional, National, International Qualified, and International Certified scorer certifications. All USAV certified referees in the Ohio Valley Region obtain a Provisional scorer certification when they complete the initial certification process. To upgrade from Provisional to Regional scorer, the scorer candidate must submit to evaluation at a tournament as designated by the OVR Officials' Chair.

To upgrade from Regional to National scorer, the scorer candidate must contact the OVR Officials' Chair by February 15 of the current year. NOTE: National and Junior National referee candidates must have at least a Regional scorer certification and must demonstrate scoring proficiency as part of the national certification process.

V. Certification Upgrade Procedures

The initial certification process for new referees has been detailed in Section II: “Becoming a Certified USAV Referee in the Ohio Valley Region” above. The following information details the evaluation process for upgrading a referee’s certification. In addition, a candidate for any of these certifications must also fulfill OVR “good standing” requirements for membership registration, clinic attendance, exams, regional officiating activities, and any other designated requirements.

The OVR Training and Evaluation Teams consist of “Referee Coaches” who are USA Junior National, National, and International referees. Some serve with the cadre of USAV Referee Coaches in the National Training/Evaluation/RISE Program, and whose experience and knowledge will prove invaluable to referees throughout the OVR.

NOTE: During an evaluation session for upgrading a certification, referees are not paid for the matches on which they are evaluated. They will be paid the established rate for any other matches. For evaluations taking place at Friendship Tournaments or other non-paying tournaments, upgrade candidates will pay a \$30 evaluation fee.

5.01 Junior Regional to Provisional Referee Upgrade

A Junior Regional referee may request to upgrade to a Provisional certification by declaring his/her intention to the regional Referees’ Chair. The USAV evaluation form or a designated OVR evaluation form may be used for this process. The evaluation will include:

- attendance at a designated OVR Evaluation Tournament or other suitable event as determined by the OVR Referees’ Chair
- at least one formal evaluation as first referee and second referee by a member of the OVR Regional Evaluation Team, with emphasis on the first referee evaluation
- a scoring review during a match

5.02 Provisional to Regional Referee Upgrade

A Provisional referee may request to upgrade to a Regional certification by declaring his/her intention to the regional Referees’ Chair. A referee may apply for this certification in the first year subsequent to receiving the Provisional certification with approval of the regional Referees’ Chair. The USAV evaluation form or a designated OVR evaluation form may be used for this process. The evaluation will include:

- **OPTIONAL:** attendance at an OVR Training Tournament as designated by the OVR Referees’ Chair. A training tournament includes training and feedback to prepare the Regional referee candidate for an upcoming evaluation.
- **REQUIRED:** attendance at the OVR Girls’ Regional Championships or other designated event as determined by the OVR Referees’ Chair, which will include at least one formal evaluation as first and second referee, as well as a scoring review match; the first and second referee evaluations are pass/fail.

5.03 Regional to Junior National Referee Candidate

A Regional referee may request to become a candidate for Junior National referee by declaring his/her intention to the regional Referees' Chair. A referee may apply for this certification in the first year subsequent to receiving a Regional referee certification. Factors used to determine viable OVR Junior National referee candidates include but aren't limited to: professionalism, OVR good standing, exam results, and participation in OVR-sponsored events.

The following procedure will be used to prepare and evaluate OVR Junior National referee candidate(s):

- **OPTIONAL:** attendance at an OVR Training Tournament as determined by the OVR Referees' Chair. A training tournament includes training and feedback to prepare the referee for an upcoming formal evaluation.
- **REQUIRED:** attendance at the OVR Boys' Regional Championship or other designated event as determined by the OVR Referees' Chair, which will include at least one formal evaluation as first and second referees, as well as a scoring review match.

Areas of emphasis for Jr. National candidates:

<u>First Referee</u>	<u>Second Referee</u>
Professionalism	Dealing with coaches/players
Mechanics and protocols	Alignments
Dealing with coaches/players	Transition
Ball handling	Court/bench awareness
Back row issues	Mechanics and rules knowledge
Rules knowledge	Knowledge of scoring procedures
Unusual circumstances	Assistance to first referee
Presence/Demeanor/Professionalism	Presence/Demeanor/Professionalism

After prospective Junior National candidates have received training and feedback at a training tournament, they will be formally evaluated at the OVR Boys' Regional Championship or other designated event to determine their competency and potential for success as a Junior National referee candidate. After review of all prospective candidates, the OVR Referees' Chair will determine which prospective candidate(s) will be submitted to USA Volleyball as Junior National referee candidates representing the OVR. These candidates must be ranked (1, 2, 3, etc.) with the strongest candidate ranked "1" in case all candidates are not accepted due to limited openings at the USA Volleyball Girls' Junior National Championships.

The USA Volleyball evaluation forms may be utilized during this process. Copies are available from the regional Referees' Chair.

The OVR Junior National referee candidate(s) must receive signed approval from the regional Referees' Chair and regional Commissioner. The application, signature page, and application fee must be submitted by the candidate **to the OVR Referees' chair, who will submitted all Junior National referee candidate applications to USA Volleyball by the established deadline each season.**



5.04 Junior National to National Referee Candidate

A Junior National referee may request to become a candidate for National referee by applying to the USAV Director of Officials, or her/his designee. In addition to the application, three Recommendation Forms must be submitted to apply for candidacy. Additional information for prospective National referee candidates is found online: <https://usavolleyball.org/resources-for-officials/indoor-referees/> in the Indoor Referees → Applications section. The National referee candidate's application must be signed by the OVR Referees' Chair and OVR Commissioner to confirm the candidate's good standing within the OVR.

The following procedure will be used to prepare and evaluate prospective OVR National referee candidate(s):

- OPTIONAL: attendance at a designated OVR Training Tournament as determined by the OVR Referees' Chair. A training tournament includes training and feedback to prepare the referee for an upcoming formal evaluation.
- OPTIONAL: attendance at the OVR Boys' Regional Championship or other designated event as determined by the OVR Referees' Chair, which will include at least one formal evaluation as first and second referees, as well as a scoring review match.

Areas of emphasis for National candidates:

<u>First Referee</u>	<u>Second Referee</u>
Professionalism	Professionalism
Dealing with coaches/players	Dealing with coaches/players
Ball handling consistency	Transition
Rules knowledge/Common Sense	Alignments and player positioning
Handling unusual circumstances	Mechanics/rules knowledge/common sense
Presence, comportment	Proficient scoring knowledge

After any prospective National candidates have received training and feedback at a training tournament, they will be offered a formal evaluation at the OVR Boys' or Girls' Regional Championship or other designated event to offer additional feedback and critique using the USAV evaluation forms.

The signed application page with three Recommendation Forms and the application fee must be submitted by the candidate to USA Volleyball by the established deadline each season. NOTE: National referee candidates must have a working knowledge of scoring procedures and should have at least a Regional USAV scorer certification.

5.05 National Referee to USA International Referee Candidate

Referees who have interest in becoming USA International referee candidates should contact the OVR Referees' Chair.

VI. Officiating in the Ohio Valley Region and Outside the Region

6.01 Referee Uniform Requirements

The standard USA Volleyball official's uniform is required at all OVR-sanctioned events. It consists of:

- Dark navy-blue slacks (no jeans, no cotton pants, etc.) with a navy blue or black belt (if slacks have belt loops)
- White, blue, or gray Certified Volleyball Official shirt (short or long-sleeved); select OVR-branded outerwear may also be worn at local and regional events with the OVR Referees' Chair approval
 - Other apparel or jackets may not be worn, nor "fanny" packs, cell phones clipped to the belt/waistband, etc
- The USAV referee patch is worn on the upper right chest area; Junior Regional referees do not receive a patch
- Solid white athletic shoes and white crew socks
- Officiating equipment and apparel items may be available for purchase through the OVR
- NOTE: FIVB certified referees are permitted to wear the approved FIVB uniform and patch at all OVR events

6.02 Officiating Equipment

At a minimum, all referees should carry the following equipment items:

- Whistle with lanyard; preferably the whistle will be black or white and the lanyard will match
- Yellow and Red cards
- Timing device displaying minutes and seconds
- Flipping coin
- USA Volleyball Indoor Rules Book
- Net measuring chain or device
- Ball pressure gauge and hand pump
- RECOMMENDED: a set of line judge flags

NOTE: Earplugs are permitted provided they allow the referee to properly communicate with participants and officials.

6.03 Local Tournament Assignments

Referees are responsible for obtaining their own local assignments. This can be done by contacting the tournament director or assignor (if one is listed) for that event, **or by using the "request assignment" feature on each tournament webpage.**

In addition, tournament directors and assignors often send "mass emails" via the OVR referees' database to solicit referees for their events. Early response to these emails increases the opportunity to be assigned to the event. Referees are hired at the discretion of the tournament director or assignor. **NOTE:** Referees may not serve as the tournament director, tournament staff, or a coach/team personnel at an event in which he/she is also assigned as a referee. A referee who violates this policy is subject to sanction.

Referees who have not registered for the current season may not accept assignments, verbally or otherwise, until the registration process has been fully completed. Referees who do so may be removed from the assignment. It is the responsibility of each referee to only accept tournament assignments at the level appropriate for his/her certification. In some instances, it may be necessary for the referee and/or tournament director to request approval from the OVR Referees' Chair for lower rated referees to work levels above their designated certification level; *see also Sections 4.01, 4.02, 4.03.*

6.04 Regional Tournament Assignments

Referees for all OVR regional events are assigned by the OVR Referees' Chair or designated OVR staff. These events include, among others: all OVR Regional Championships, the Bid National Qualifier, and GCCC events. Referees who officiate these events must be in good standing for that season.

6.05 Compensation

Referees in the Ohio Valley Region are compensated on a tiered pay scale based upon their certification level, described below. Referees are generally paid on the final day of the competition, but different payment arrangements may be agreed upon by tournament staff and the referee(s). For local tournaments, referees are paid for a minimum of six matches per day unless other arrangements are made between the tournament staff and the referee(s). For large OVR-run tournaments or convention center events, referees may be paid per match. Single set (play-off) matches are paid less than a full match fee; "automatic" three sets are paid more than a full match fee.

- Junior Regional: \$35.00 per match (2/3); \$52.50 per match (3/5)
- Provisional/Regional/Retired Jr National/Retired National: \$37.50 per match (2/3); \$56.25 per match (3/5)
- Junior National/National: \$40 per match (2/3); \$60.00 per match (3/5)

6.06 Failure to Fulfill Assignments

The Ohio Valley Region utilizes a written contract for OVR-run assignments, as well as local tournament assignments. Referees must exhibit integrity and commitment when accepting an assignment. The OVR is not a party to contracts issued by local tournament hosts.

Circumstances (illness, family emergency, etc.) may arise in which a referee must cancel an assignment. In such cases, the referee must notify the tournament director or assignor as soon as possible so an appropriate replacement can be found. In some cases, the referee may need to assist with finding a replacement, and that replacement is subject to the approval of the tournament director or assignor.

Referees who exhibit a pattern of canceling assignments or who perform below reasonable officiating standards may be subject to sanction, up to and including suspension.

6.07 Officiating Non-Sanctioned Tournaments

When a referee accepts a tournament assignment at an event that is not sanctioned by the OVR or other USAV entity, the referee assumes liability and other insurance responsibilities. If a participant, spectator, an official, or other person in attendance is injured or has an accident, the tournament host and/or facility manager assumes responsibility for insurance coverage, and referees assume the same responsibility. The OVR is not involved with any non-sanctioned events. Participants, including referees, must use their own insurance coverage.

6.08 Working outside the Ohio Valley Region

As a courtesy, referees with a certification lower than Junior National, who wish to work USAV events outside the Ohio Valley Region, should contact the OVR Referees' Chair and the referee chair or head referee of the host region prior to accepting the assignment. Provisional referees with less than two full seasons of USAV experience should contact the OVR Referees' Chair prior to accepting the assignment. Junior referees should not officiate outside of the Ohio Valley Region.

6.09 Officiating Activities Logbook

Each referee should keep a yearly log of officiating activities, including but not limited to USAV and collegiate assignments. The log should include date, site, teams (if appropriate) or level of competition (ie., NCAA Division III or Girls' 17s, etc.), number of matches worked (if appropriate for USAV tournaments), and assigned position (R1, R2, SK).

VII. OVR Policies and Procedures

7.01 USA Volleyball Background Screen Policy

The USAV Background Screening Policy is covered in detail on the OVR website:
<https://www.ovr.org/background/index.php>

7.02 Junior Tournament Procedures

OVR Junior Tournament Procedures are available online at the OVR website:
http://www.ovr.org/juniors/tournament_packet/index.php

It is recommended that referees carry a copy of this document with them for each assignment.

7.03 OVR Forms and Documents

Includes USAV forms, OVR Incident and Injury Reports, Insurance forms, and USAV scoresheets & line-up sheets:
<https://www.ovr.org/forms/index.php>

7.04 Seasonal OVR Officiating Memos

All relevant officiating-related memos from the current season can be found online at the OVR website:
<https://www.ovr.org/officiating/memos/index.php>

7.05 Officiating Tips

Officiating tips, hints and suggestions shared by experienced referees: <https://www.ovr.org/officiating/memos/tips.php>



7.06 Referee's Tournament Procedures

Referees should contact the tournament director via email several days in advance of the assignment to confirm any final details. They should contact the other referees assigned to the tournament to confirm their travel plans & arrival times, coordinate shirt colors, and to share cell phone numbers in case of emergency. NOTE: It is not required that all referees wear the same color uniform shirt at a tournament, but it is recommended whenever all referees have the designated color.

Referees must be present in uniform no less than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time for the tournament; 45 minutes is preferred.

The OVR hiring policy for referees is typically 1.5 referees per court. For odd numbers of courts, round down to the lower number. For example:

- one court - two referees
- two courts - three referees
- three courts - four referees (instead of five; see 4 Refs on 3 Courts^ below)
- four courts - five or six referees (see 5 Refs on 4 Courts^ below)
- five courts - seven referees (see 3 Refs on 2 Courts^ and 4 Refs on 3 Courts^ below)
- six courts - eight referees (two groups of 4 Refs on 3 Courts^ below)

The standard officiating rotation is "work two (or three), off one" except for the first round of play. As the first match on each court ends, one of the "off" referees will replace that referee and then work two (or three) matches on that court.

For the examples below, the letters A, B, C, D and/or E each represent a referee: 3 referees on 2 courts, 6 pool play matches and 3 bracket-play matches, 4 referees on 3 courts (the recommended number for a three-court event), and 5 referees on 4 courts:

3 Refs on 2 Courts^ (6 matches each)	
Ct 1	Ct 2
A	B
A	C
B	C
B	A
C	A
C	B
A	B
A	C
B	C

4 Refs on 3 Courts^ (7 matches each)		
Ct 1	Ct 2	Ct 3
A	B	C
D	B	C
D	A	C
D	A	B
C	A	B
C	D	B
C	D	A
B	D	A
B	C	A
D		

5 Refs on 4 Courts^ (8 matches each)			
Ct 1	Ct 2	Ct 3	Ct 4
A	B	C	D
E	B	C	D
E	A	C	D
E	A	B	D
E	A	B	C
D	A	B	C
D	E	B	C
D	E	A	C
D	E	A	B
C/E		A/B	

7.07 “Good Standing” Policy for Referees

"Good standing" describes a referee who has met all certification requirements for the season, actively participates in events, and shows dedication to the OVR.

A. Junior Regional and Provisional Referees

- 1) Register online, pay OVR-USAV membership fees, and submit associated paperwork (online) each year
- 2) Attend a pre-season OVR officiating clinic, in person or virtual (online)
- 3) Complete the designated USAV rules/scoring exams and training modules by March 1
- 4) Officiate at least two regular-season, OVR-sanctioned tournaments annually
- 5) Complete USAV background screen, SafeSport training, and Concussion awareness training, as required
- 6) Uphold the highest standards of professionalism, as designated in *Section VIII Professional Standards and Officiating Ethics* below

B. Regional Referees

- 1) Register online, pay OVR-USAV membership fees, and submit associated paperwork (online) each year
- 2) Attend a pre-season OVR officiating clinic, in person or virtual (online)
- 3) Complete the designated USAV rules/scoring exams and training modules by March 1
- 4) Officiate at least two regular-season, OVR-sanctioned tournaments annually
- 5) Complete USAV background screen, SafeSport training, and Concussion management training, as required
- 6) Be available for assignment at OVR regional events (Boys', Girls', or Adult Championships; Bid Tournaments; Challenge Tournaments), as requested by the OVR Referees' Chair
- 7) Uphold the highest standards of professionalism, as designated in *Section VIII Professional Standards and Officiating Ethics* below

C. Junior National and National Referees

- 1) Register online, pay OVR-USAV membership fees, and submit associated paperwork (online) each year
- 2) Attend a pre-season OVR officiating clinic, in person or virtual (online)
- 3) Complete the designated USAV rules/scoring exams and training modules by the established National deadline
- 4) Officiate at least two regular-season, OVR-sanctioned tournaments annually
- 5) Complete USAV background screen, SafeSport training, and Concussion management training, as required
- 6) Be available for assignment at OVR regional events (Boys', Girls', or Adult Championships; Bid Tournaments; Challenge Tournaments), as requested by the OVR Referees' Chair
- 7) Be available to serve as a clinician at an OVR officiating clinic, or be willing to serve with the OVR Training/Evaluation Team as a "Referee Coach"
- 8) Uphold the highest standards of professionalism, as designated in *Section VIII Professional Standards and Officiating Ethics* below

There are also requirements set forth by USA Volleyball to maintain good standing with the national organization. Junior National and National referees' good standing status is reported annually to the USAV Director of Officials.

VIII. Professional Standards and Officiating Ethics

1. **Conflict of Interest.** When a referee is affiliated with a club or team as a coach, club director, parent, chaperone, etc., the referee should not officiate matches involving that club or team and should not officiate tournaments run by the affiliated club.
2. **OVR Tournament Policies & Procedures.** Referees must never knowingly accept assignments for OVR-sanctioned tournaments or events that are in violation of OVR policies.
3. **OVR Official's Handbook Policies.** Referees must abide by officiating policies and procedures as outlined in this document, the OVR Official's Handbook.
4. **Uniform Requirements.** The standard USAV uniform and certification patch must be worn at all USAV sanctioned events in the Ohio Valley Region. This uniform includes navy-blue slacks (no jeans or cotton pants); a Certified Volleyball Official shirt (white, blue or grey; short or long-sleeved) or other approved OVR-branded tops; solid white athletic shoes; white crew socks; and a black or navy-blue belt if slacks provide belt loops. FIVB certified referees may wear the approved FIVB uniform and patch at all sanctioned OVR events.
5. **Conduct.** Referees must never have inappropriate contact with junior players. This includes physical contact or unnecessary interactions at events, personal contact outside the tournament environment, or contact via social media or other electronic communication. Further, referees must refrain from engaging spectators, especially while officiating, and must also maintain a professional, courteous demeanor with coaches, participants and fellow officials.
6. **Public Comments.** Referees must refrain from making derogatory comments about fellow referees, players, coaches, or other participants, or the OVR administration or staff, in any public setting, including social media.
7. **Fulfillment of Assignments.** Referees must fulfill assignments as agreed upon between the referee and a tournament director or assignor. This includes verbal agreements and written contracts. In the case of emergency, the referee must provide the tournament director or assignor with reasonable notice so that a replacement can be secured. A referee who exhibits a pattern of not fulfilling assignments may be subject to sanction.

Also, as noted in the OVR Junior Tournament Procedures, failure by a tournament director or assignor to notify a referee(s) of any cancellation of an assignment may require the tournament director to pay the referee a minimum of one match fee (\$35) or more, as determined by the regional Commissioner. This fee covers "time and travel" expenses when the referee's services are not needed but the referee has arrived at the tournament to fulfill an officiating obligation.
8. The above items are in addition to the USAV and OVR Codes of Conduct and Ethics.

Violation of any of the above items may result in sanction (probation, suspension, loss of certification; see *Member Sanctions, Section IX* below) as deemed appropriate by the Referees' Chair and Commissioner.

OVR members are entitled to Due Process (<http://www.ovr.org/executive/dueprocess.php>) as provided in the OVR By-laws (<http://www.ovr.org/executive/bylaws.pdf>).

IX. Member Sanctions

Late Membership Registration

The USA Volleyball season runs from September 1 through August 31. Each year, all USAV members in the Ohio Valley Region must renew their membership. It is recommended that these dues be paid no later than **October 31** of each year.

NOTE: A referee who cannot register by October 31 but intends to officiate that season should notify the OVR Referees' Chair. The referee may not officiate any USAV-sanctioned events in the OVR or any other USAV region until the membership renewal and certification requirements are complete.

Probation

Probationary status results in the referee being ineligible to officiate in any OVR-run events including but not limited to: Power Challenges/Tournaments, any Regional Championship, and Bid Tournaments, or Qualifiers. Probation will last for the remainder of the current season. "Good standing" can be regained the following season as indicated in *Section 7.07* above.

Failure to complete the designated online rules and scoring exams or USAV Academy coursework by the deadline(s) may result in the referee being placed on probation for the remainder of the season. The referee must still complete the exam(s) as soon as possible after the deadline. The referee may not officiate at a USAV-sanctioned event in the OVR or other USAV region until successful completion of the exam(s).

Failure to attend an OVR pre-season officiating clinic, in person or online, or to complete any designated make-up clinic may result in the referee being placed on probation for the remainder of the current season.

Probation is removed when the referee regains good standing by completing annual certification requirements in the subsequent season.

Loss of Certification

A referee's certification may be rescinded or reduced (Regional to Provisional, Provisional to Junior Regional) for the following reasons, including but not limited to: failing to complete the designated rules and scoring exams during two consecutive seasons; failing to register as an OVR-USAV member; failing to uphold any item in the Professional Standards and Officiating Ethics (as noted above in *Section VIII*); failing to officiate at the minimum standards for that certification level; failing to maintain "good standing" within the OVR during two consecutive seasons.

A Junior Regional, Provisional, or Regional referee who fails to attend an OVR pre-season officiating clinic for two consecutive seasons; who fails to complete the online exams by the deadline for two consecutive seasons; or who fails to complete one or the other for two consecutive seasons, will lose his/her referee and scorer certifications and will be removed from the list of OVR Certified Referees. To regain certification, the referee must go through a re-certification evaluation (in the year after losing the certification) or must attend the new referees' training/evaluation program (two or more years after losing the certification); evaluations will be pass/fail.

Suspension

Violation of any of the OVR or USAV Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics, or OVR Professional Standards and Officiating Ethics, may result in suspension by the OVR Commissioner. The duration of the suspension is determined by the OVR Commissioner. Upon completion of the suspension, the referee must submit to re-evaluation, pass/fail, to regain certification as a USAV referee. OVR members are entitled to Due Process as provided in the OVR By-Laws (<http://www.ovr.org/executive/dueprocess.php>).

NOTE: Any sanctions imposed upon Junior National or National referees must be reported to the USAV Director of Officials, along with the good standing status for each Junior National or National referee.

X. Miscellaneous OVR Officiating Information

10.01 Mentoring

All referees, particularly Regional and above, are encouraged to mentor a new/newer referee to offer guidance, critique, feedback, and instruction. Experienced referees can help ensure the success of an up-and-coming referee by providing valuable insight and direction.

10.02 Serving as a Head Referee at a Local Tournament

A head referee will be designated for each tournament (or each site in the case of multiple venues for a single event). Generally, the referee with the highest certification level assumes this role. If all referees have the same certification level, the most experienced referee should fulfill this responsibility. The tournament director may designate a head referee, or the referees may select a head referee from the crew of referees assigned to the tournament. (NOTE: Tournament directors will compensate a head referee at the rate of **\$5 per court per day**, in addition to any match fees.)

Duties and responsibilities:

- Arrive approximately 45 minutes before the tournament's scheduled start time to meet with the tournament director to determine playing formats and ground rules.
- Attend the pre-tournament coaches' meeting to: 1) answer questions about the facility ground rules or USAV playing rules, and 2) to determine if any participants are carrying OVR or USAV waivers for equipment or uniform.
- Confirm playing ground rules with all assigned referees for each court to ensure the consistent application of the ground rules by the crew of referees.
- Assist referees with court assignments and the referee rotation scheme, and help to ensure that referees are working match levels appropriate for their certification.
- If appropriate, designate referees for any play-off matches and the bracket play.
- Serve as the chair of the protest committee and select its members (see *10.03* below).
- Remain present at the tournament until the final match has concluded. (NOTE: Two referees must remain present at the tournament until the conclusion of the final match. They should depart the playing venue together.)
- Serve as a liaison between the tournament and the Referee Chair if any concerns arise related to the playing facilities, officiating performances, team uniform issues, or conduct of participants or spectators.
- Recommended to carry a copy of the Junior Tournament Procedures.
- Recommended to carry copies of a deciding/non-deciding scoresheet, line-up sheet/roster, Libero Control sheet, Incident Report, and Injury/Property Damage Report; all forms can be found on the OVR website (<https://www.ovr.org/forms/index.php>).

10.03 Handling Protests

Should a protest occur during a local OVR-sanctioned tournament, the following procedure should be applied:

- Only valid protests based upon USAV 5.1.2.1 of the USAV Indoor Rules Book will be accepted.
- The first referee must stop the match and go to the scorer's table to consult the rules book. If it is determined that the referee's decision was in error, the correct ruling will be implemented, which may also necessitate a replay.
- If the protest cannot be resolved by consulting the USAV Indoor Rules Book, the head referee for the tournament should be consulted, and the tournament protest committee convened. (The committee should be established prior to the start of competition.)

- If the protest still cannot be resolved by the protest committee, the head referee and/or responsible referee should contact the OVR Referees' Chair: 419-410-2291.
- If the OVR Referees' Chair cannot be reached, and the protest cannot be resolved, the match shall resume from the point of protest with the first referee's original decision. At the conclusion of the match, copies of all match scoresheets, line-up sheets (including rosters), and Libero Control sheet must be submitted to the OVR Referees' Chair along with a detailed description of the protest. The complete name of the team, protesting captain and/or coach must be included along with the name of the opposing coach/team.
- The referees and coaches involved will be notified of the outcome. If the protesting team subsequently wins the set in which the protest was lodged, the protest will be considered null and void. If the protesting team subsequently loses the set in which the protest was lodged but wins the match, the protest will be considered null and void. In any case, a replay of the protested set will not take place after the conclusion of the tournament. The respective OVR Junior Program Director will make any determinations regarding match or tournament results and the related seeding points.
- A protest committee, at minimum, should include: 1) the head referee, 2) the tournament director, 3) and a designated referee or coach not involved in the match.

10.04 Collegiate Officiating

USA Volleyball and the Professional Association of Volleyball Officials (<http://www.pavo.org/>) have a close relationship with numerous similarities in rules, refereeing techniques, and interpretations. There are reciprocal agreements in place to allow referees from one organization to obtain a certification with the other, both at the regional and national levels. Inquiries can be directed to the OVR Referees' Chair or a local PAVO Board Chair.

In the Ohio Valley Region, USAV referees often receive opportunities during the women's fall collegiate season and the men's winter/spring collegiate season. It is recommended that officials who work women's collegiate volleyball join a [local PAVO Board](#). For more information, contact the OVR Referees' Chair or one of the following PAVO local board chairs:

Local PAVO Boards in the Ohio Valley Region:

Northeast Ohio Board of Certified Officials	Joe Salak, Jr.	joejr4him231@gmail.com	(330) 338-1602
Wooster-Ashland Board of Officials	Jr. Calton	Jr.Calton.VB@gmail.com	(419) 277-7804
Southwestern Ohio Board of Officials	Lucas Tuggle	LucasTug33@gmail.com	(740) 815-7708
West Penn-Ohio Board	Chuck Fleet	crfvb5@aol.com	(724) 734-9164
West Virginia Board of Officials	Lori Stahara	lstahara@yahoo.com	(304) 288-4408

10.05 OVR Contacts

- Chief Operating Officer - Ron Wyzynski (wyzynski@ovr.org)
- Commissioner/President - Brian Hofman (hofman@ovr.org)
- Referees' & Scorers' Chair - Brian Hemelgarn (hemelgarn@ovr.org)
- New Officials & Junior Officials Development - Jared Malott (hammar@ovr.org), Katie Wagner (kwagnervb@gmail.com)
- Webmaster - Chris Bielby (ovrwebsite@gmail.com)
- Special Events, Membership/Registration - Al Herbert (herbert@ovr.org)
- Juniors' Tournament Coordinator - Tom Kohl (kohl@ovr.org)
- Junior Girls' Program Coordinator - Bill Zehler (zehler@ovr.org)
- Junior Boys' Program Coordinator - Matt Mihelic (mattmihelic@gmail.com)
- Safe Sport Coordinator - Diane Hood (hood@ovr.org)
- Compliance & Verifications - Stephen J. Donahue (donahue@ovr.org)